



Ya Boy

14

Konnings!

STORY BY YUTO YOTSUBA
ART BY RYO OGAWA

ya + Boy Kong + ming!

14

STORY BY **YUTO YOTSUBA**

ART BY **RYO OGAWA**



Kabetaijin

A three-time consecutive winner of the MC DRB battle. When Kongming helped him overcome his past trauma, Kabetaijin was able to return to the stage.



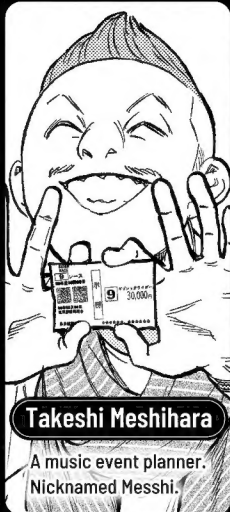
Shino Sakurai

A talented office clerk who manages The Fourth Kingdom's information database. Determined to be an indispensable force, she was hired as an official employee.



Hajime Shoji

An employee of The Fourth Kingdom. Aspires to break the borders of the music industry with Kongming.



Takeshi Meshihara

A music event planner. Nicknamed Messhi.



Ryuji Sakuraba

Owner of the major rival music club, ZECT Tokyo.



Maria Diezel

An American singer who inspired Eiko to pick up the mic when her life was at its lowest.

THE STORY SO FAR

The massive outdoor music festival, **Summer Sonia**, has reached its **climax**!

After a multitude of **heavy assaults** from Kongming's strategies, Keiji Maezono lost his contracts with his sponsors and was abandoned by **his very lifeline—his father**. 40,000 people made their way to **EIKO's stage**, where she brought on the famous **Wakatsuki siblings** of the jazz world as her guests. There, on the stage, EIKO was able to unite with her fans and revel in the **joys of music** with the masses. Even **Maria Diezel**, who was listening from the side of the stage, was also touched. EIKO managed to pull off a miracle that boosted her viewership from just 311 people to a whopping 43,000. What's more, to EIKO's surprise, Maria extended an invitation to EIKO to **go back to America with her!!**



Zhuce Liang (Courtesy name Kongming)

The tactician of Shu. In 234 CE, Kongming passed away during the Battle of Wuzhang Plains, after which he was transported to Shibuya, 1800 years in the future. There, he meets the aspiring singer, Eiko Tsukimi, and appoints himself as her personal tactician.



Kobayashi

The owner of BB Lounge, where Eiko works. Quite the Three Kingdoms fanatic, he is currently Kongming's employer.

Eiko Tsukimi

Just as she was about to give up her dream of becoming a professional singer, Eiko meets Kongming on a fateful Halloween night in Shibuya. With his help, her talent in music is steadily blooming.

CHAPTER 107
Eiko's Determination

CHAPTER 108
A Sudden Break

CHAPTER 109
What Is Desired

CHAPTER 110
Something a Little Different in the City

CHAPTER 111
Interview and Dreams

CHAPTER 112
Solo Concert Strategy Meeting

CHAPTER 113
Betting Everything

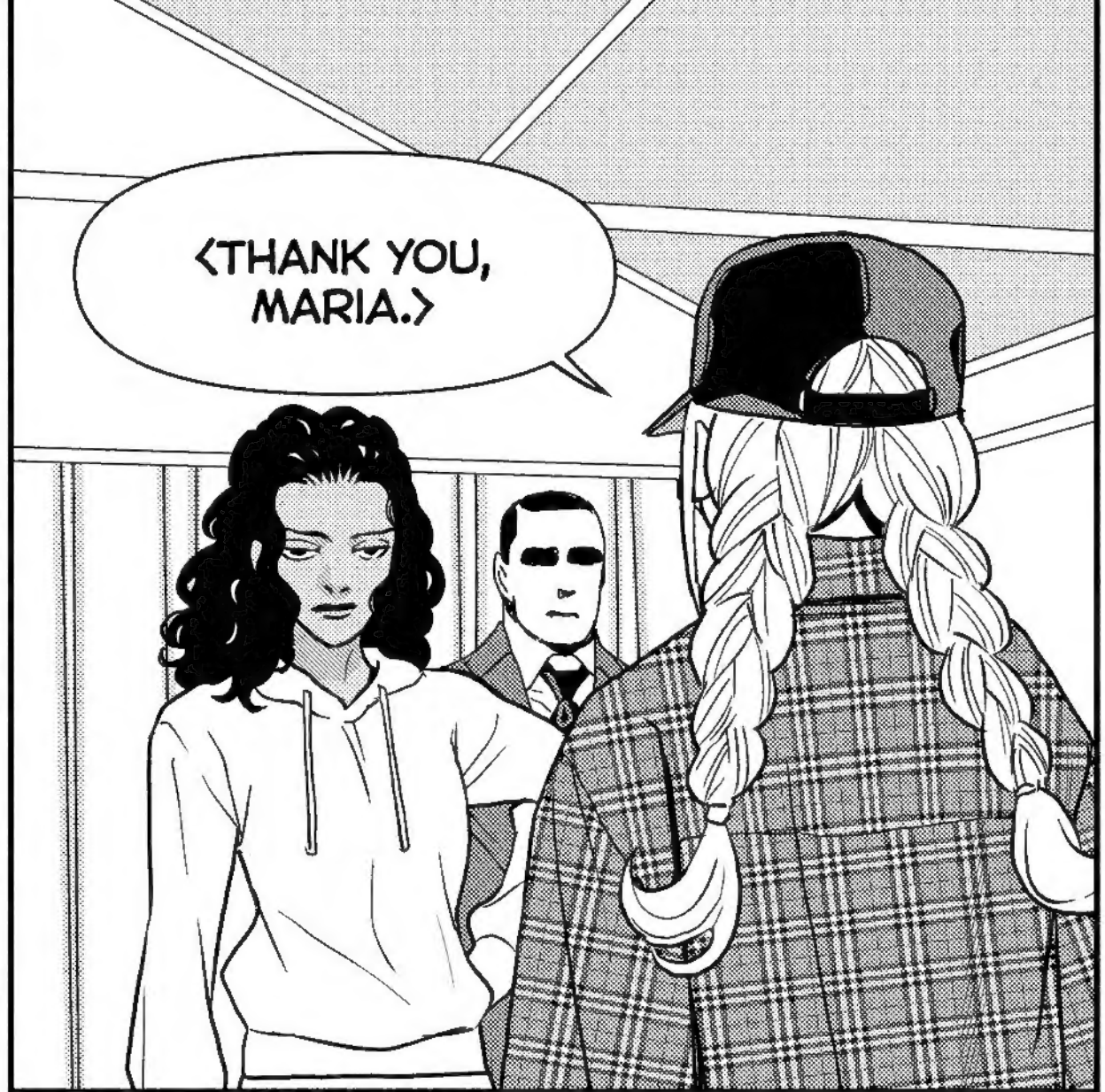
CHAPTER 114
To Their Own Battles

EXTRA
Special Short Story "Kongming, To the Neo Pub"

C O N T E N T S









〈SO I'VE DECIDED.
I'M NOT GOING TO
THE STATES.〉

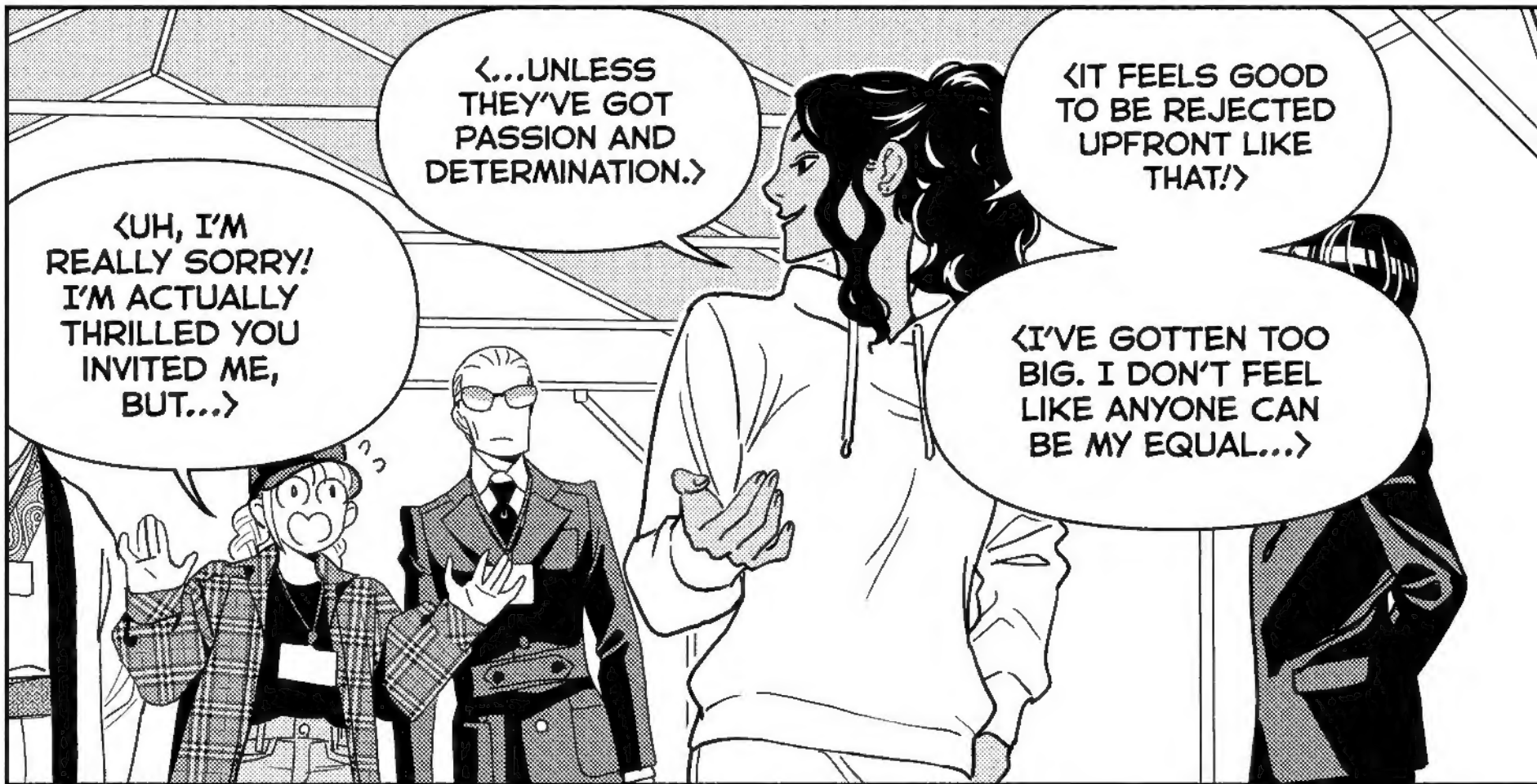




〈SOMEONE LIKE YOU
WOULDN'T WANT TO LEAVE
YOUR FATE IN SOMEONE
ELSE'S HANDS.〉



〈I THOUGHT
AS MUCH...〉



〈UH, I'M
REALLY SORRY!
I'M ACTUALLY
THRILLED YOU
INVITED ME,
BUT...〉

〈...UNLESS
THEY'VE GOT
PASSION AND
DETERMINATION.〉

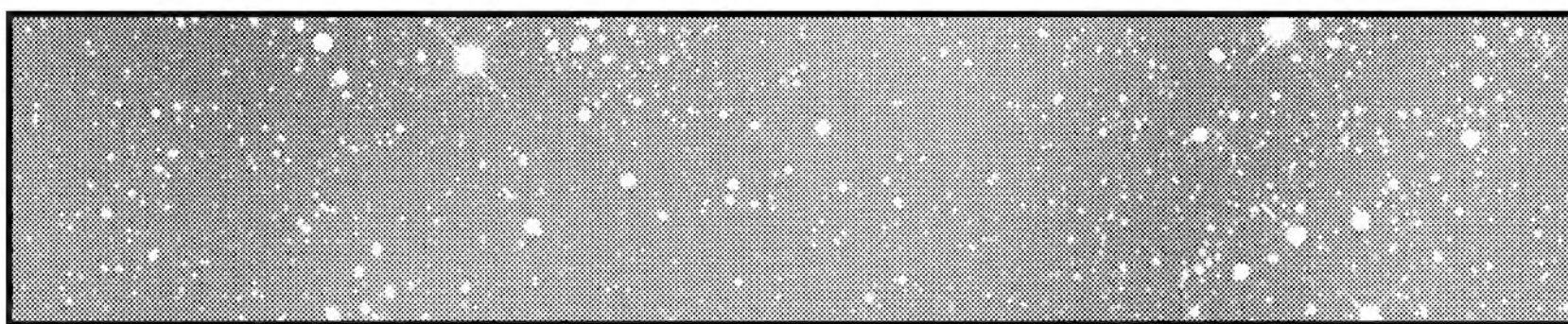
〈IT FEELS GOOD
TO BE REJECTED
UPFRONT LIKE
THAT!〉

〈I'VE GOTTEN TOO
BIG. I DON'T FEEL
LIKE ANYONE CAN
BE MY EQUAL...〉



〈WILL I SEE YOU IN
THE STATES NEXT?
OR IN BELGIUM,
AT VOICELL LAND?〉

〈I'M GLAD
I CAME TO
JAPAN.〉










YES...
AND IT IS NO
WALK IN THE
PARK FOR
THOSE PER-
FORMING.

IT'S LIKE TEN
TIMES BIGGER
THAN SUMMER
SONIA, DAMN.



IT IS NO
EXAGGERATION TO
CALL IT THE WORLD'S
GREATEST MUSIC
FESTIVAL.


OF THE GUESTS
THAT PARTICIPATE,
THEY REPRESENT
OVER A HUNDRED
DIFFERENT
COUNTRIES.

THIS
FAMOUS EVENT
SELLS OUT THEIR
TICKETS ON THE
FIRST DAY.

THERE IS
AN AUDIENCE OF
ROUGHLY 500,000
AT VOICELL LAND.
INCLUDING THOSE
WATCHING ONLINE,
THAT NUMBER WOULD
EXCEED A MILLION.



HOWEVER,
I FIND IT ALL
MEANINGLESS
IF OUR LADY
CANNOT STAND
ON VOICELL
LAND'S MAIN
STAGE.



THE MAIN
STAGE?

HUH?

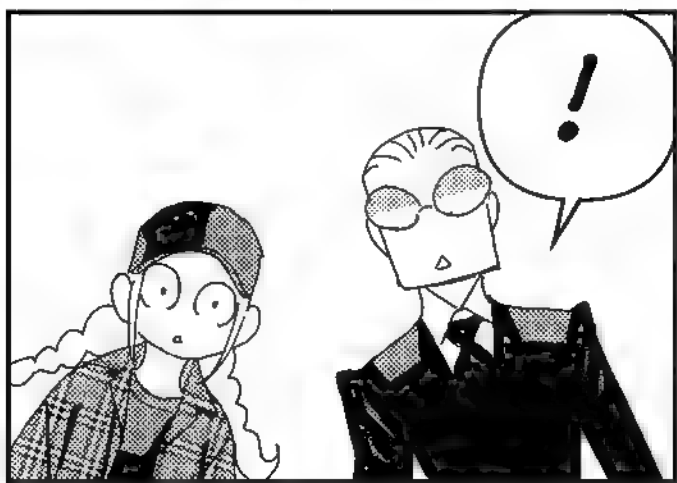


THE
MAIN STAGE
IS A BIT OF A
STRETCH. WE
GOTTA SHOOT
FOR MORE
REALISTIC
GOALS...

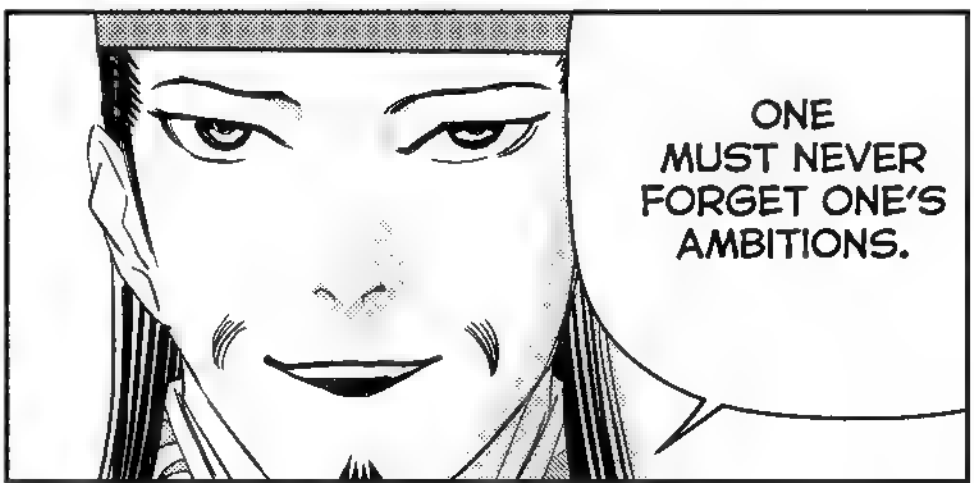
EVERY
TOP ARTIST IN
THE WORLD IS
JUST WAITING
FOR AN OFFER
TO PERFORM
THERE!

HOLD
ON A SEC!
KONGMING,
DO YOU EVEN
KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE
SAYING?!

EVEN
MARIA ISN'T
GUARANTEED A
SPOT IN VOICELL
LAND'S MAIN
PERFORMANCES!



!



ONE
MUST NEVER
FORGET ONE'S
AMBITIONS.



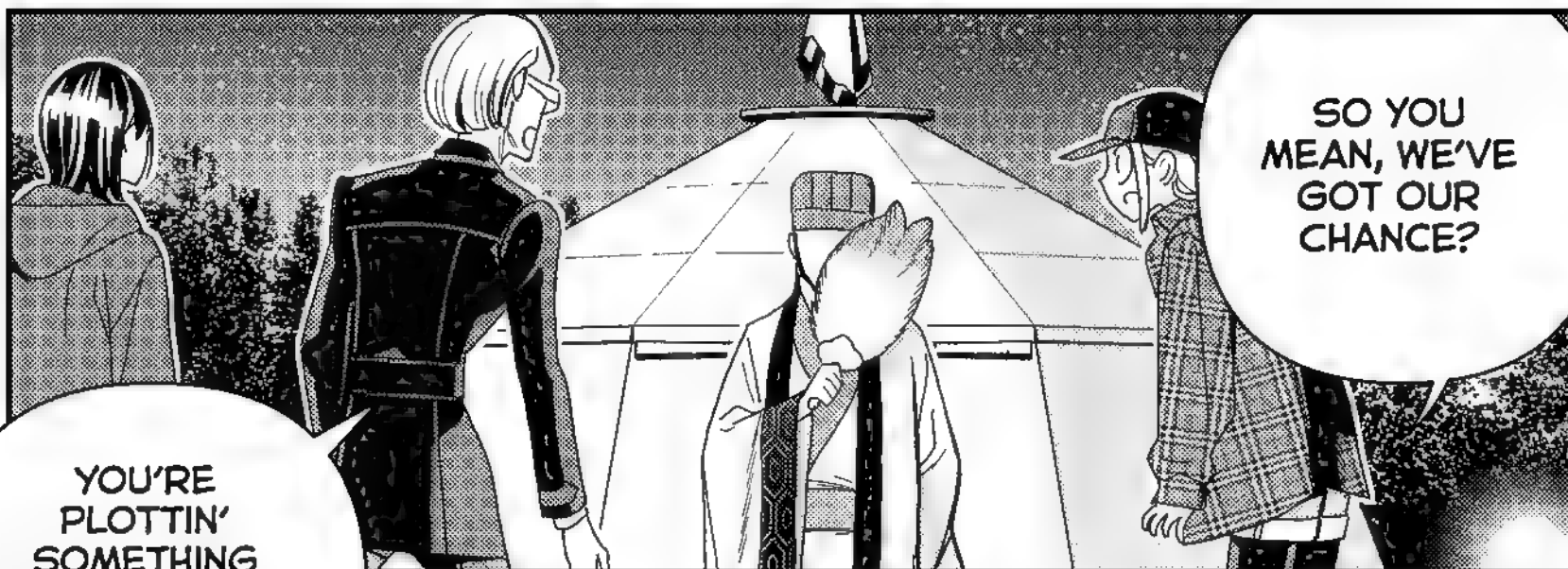
FURTHERMORE,
BASED ON MY
CALCULATIONS,
OUR VICTORY IN
SUMMER SONIA
HAS LIT THE
WAY.



IF WE ARE UNABLE
TO ACHIEVE EVEN
OUR FIRST FEAT
AS A JAPANESE
ARTIST...

VOICELL
LAND IS BUT
A VEHICLE TO
OUR FINAL
GOAL.

THEN WE
WILL NEVER
COMPLETE THE
MASTER PLAN
TO UNITE THE
WORLD IN PEACE
AND SAVE THE
LOST MASSES.



YOU'RE PLOTTIN' SOMETHING AGAIN, AREN'T YA? TELL ME ABOUT IT ALREADY!



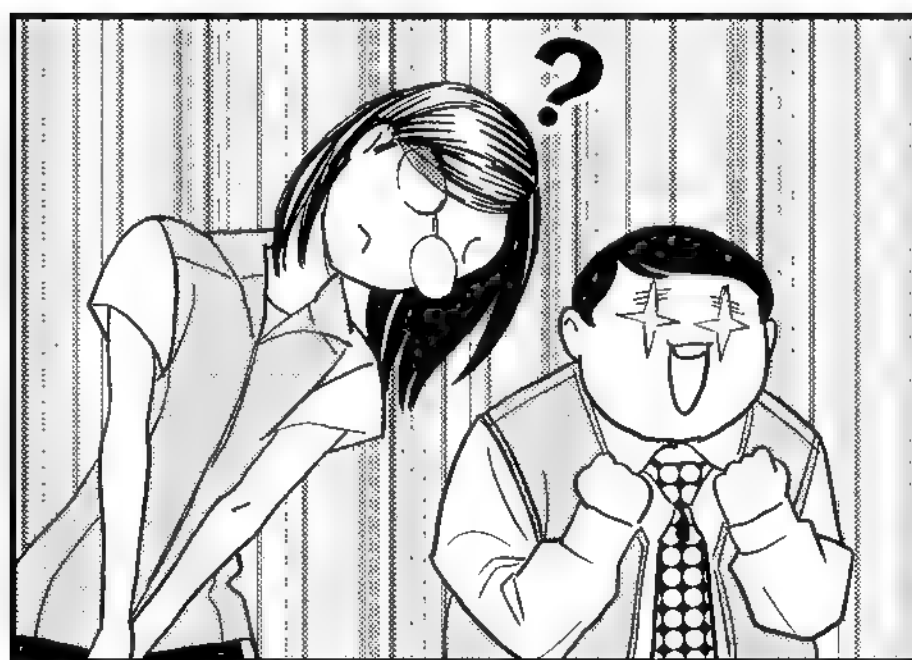
I HONESTLY CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE HOW THIS'LL WORK OUT.



FIRST...



**...WE SHALL
UNITE ALL
OF JAPAN.**





...WE'LL
THEN AIM
FOR BEYOND
THE SEAS.

ONCE WE'VE
SOLIDIFIED THE
GROUNDWORK
FOR FOURTH
KINGDOM...



THIS
IS GETTING
MORE
CONFUSING...

AH, I GET
IT NOW!

LIKE HOW LIU BEI,
WHO DIDN'T HAVE
TERRITORY TO
BEGIN WITH,
GOT HIS HANDS
ON SHU!



...WHAT
WE MUST
DO IS ALL
WRITTEN
HERE.

TO UNITE
JAPAN...



SHEESH!
CAN YOU
EXPLAIN IT
IN A WAY
THAT I CAN
UNDER-
STAND?!











I WAS TOLD
I COULDN'T
PRACTICE...

MAYBE I
SHOULD HIT
UP TOWER
RECORDS.



MY FOLLOWER
COUNT WENT UP.
I ONLY HAD ABOUT
30K BEFORE I
PERFORMED AT
SUMMER SONIA.



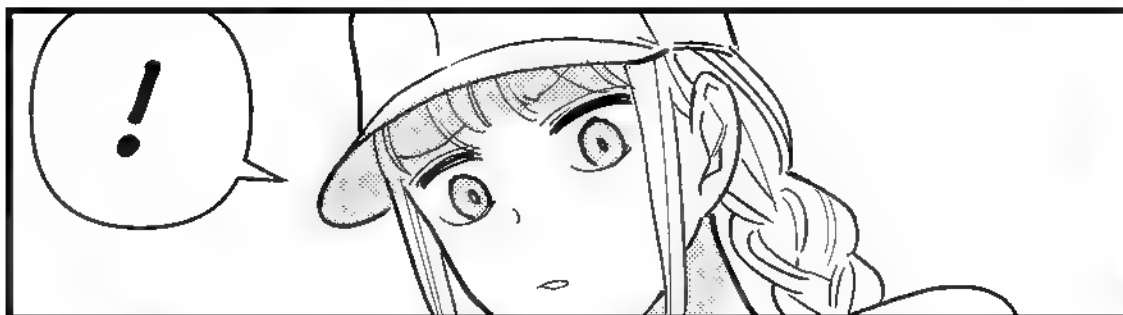
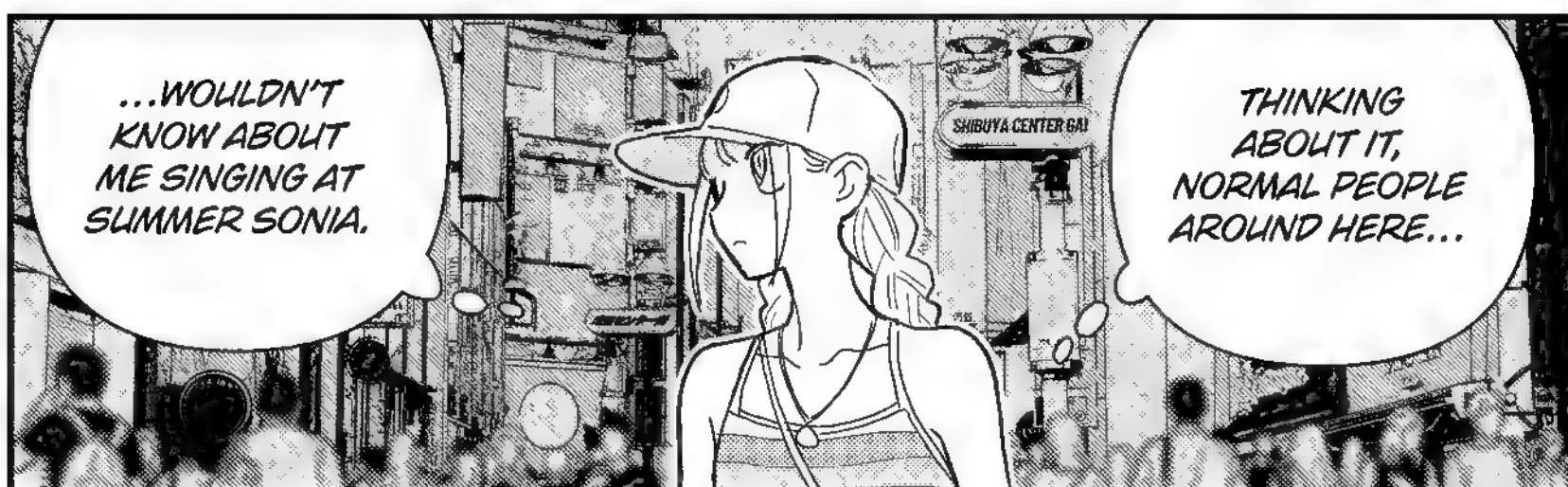
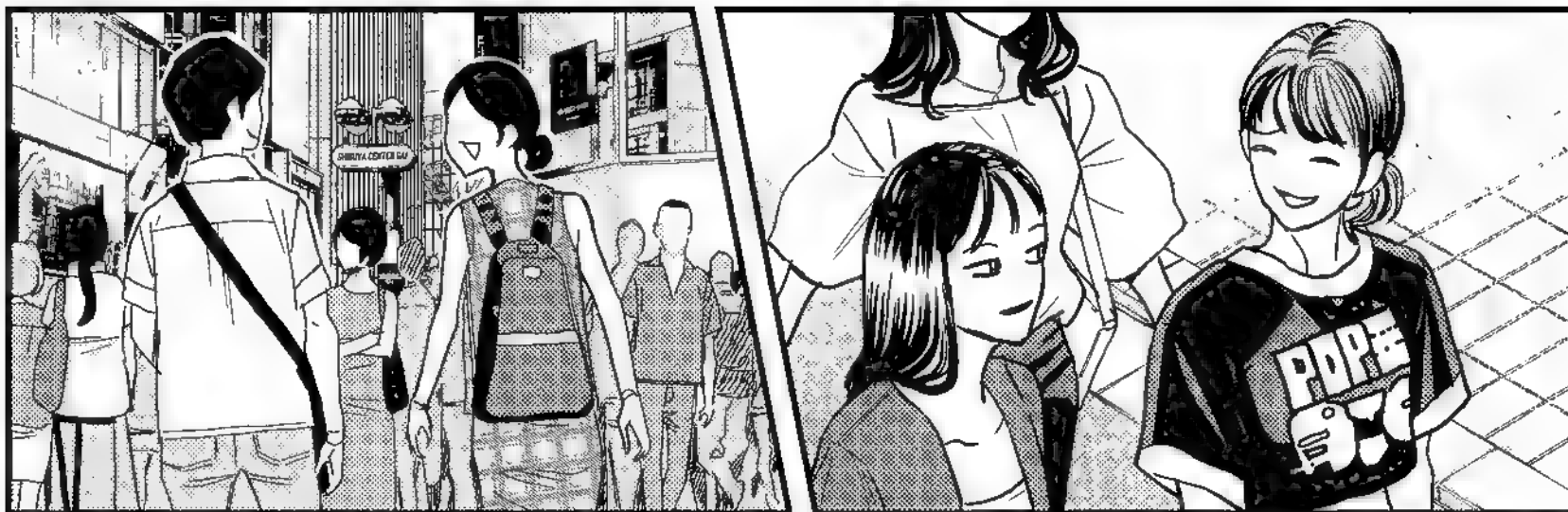
I GOT TO
HANG OUT WITH
ALL MY FRIENDS,
BUT NOW WHAT
DO I DO...?

IT'S BEEN
THREE DAYS
SINCE SUMMER
SONIA ENDED.



I MIGHT BE
GETTING PRETTY
FAMOUS, HUH?





*Was your
Mr. Perfect
image nothing
more than
a lie?*

*Is it true
that you
hired ghost
writers to
write your
songs?*

*Do you have
any regrets
for how you
fooled your
fans?*



*They're
part of
the Keiji
Maizono
team's
production
staff.*

*I had
a formal
contract
with them,
and yes,
I've been
paying
them.*

*Since it's
still under my
production name,
I don't feel the
need to apologize
to anyone. If
my fans end up
hating me, then
they don't have
to listen to
my music.*



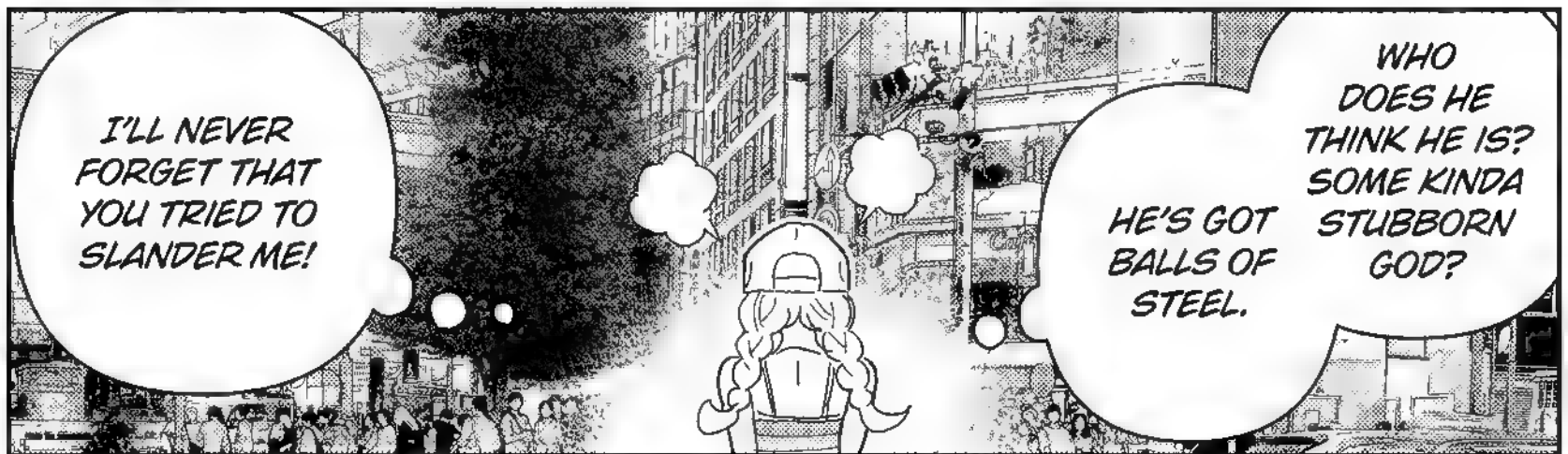
But the truth is, you still lied to them.

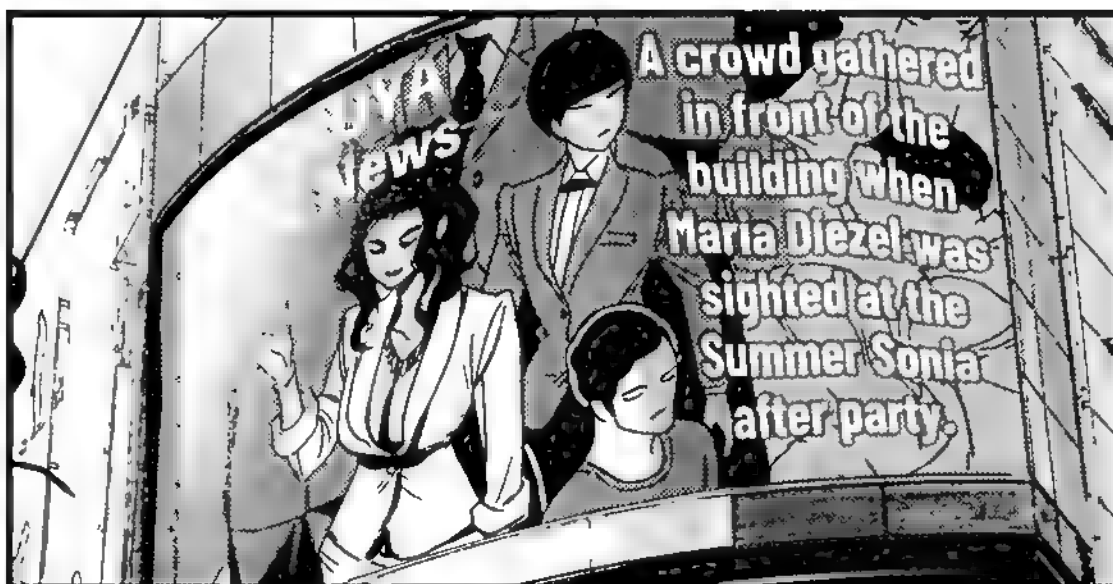



Who cares about that crap? Just come see my concerts.



Lately, Japan's got this terrible habit of continuously kicking someone when they're down.







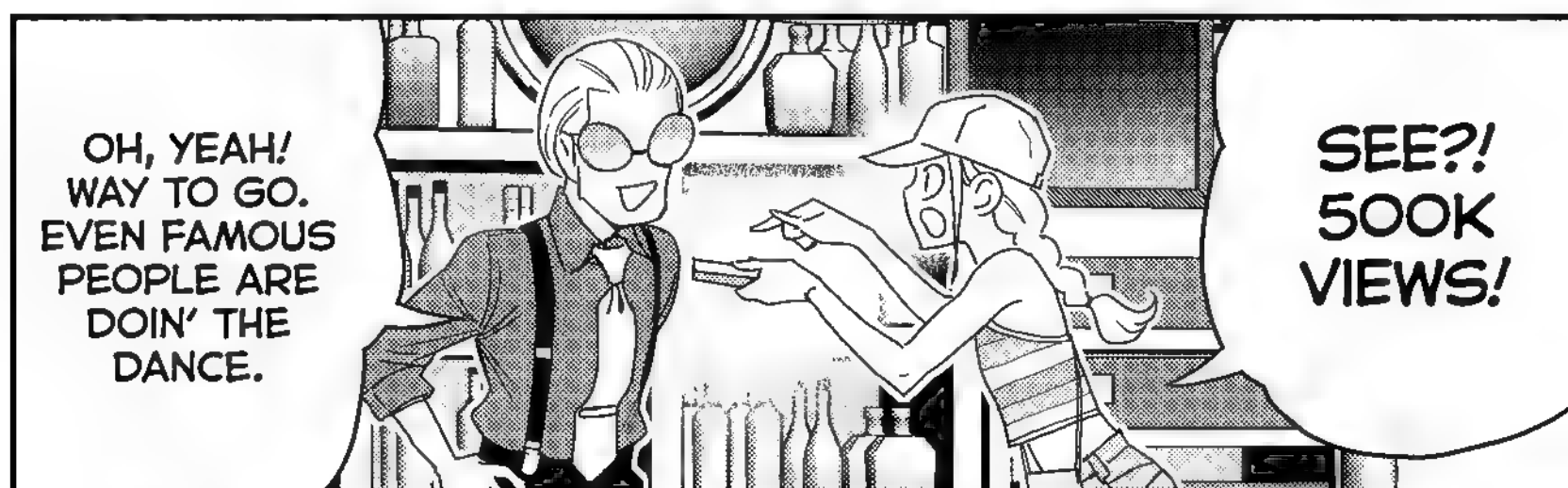
**...BUT
WHAT DOES IT
MEAN TO CLAIM
JAPAN AS OUR
TERRITORY?**





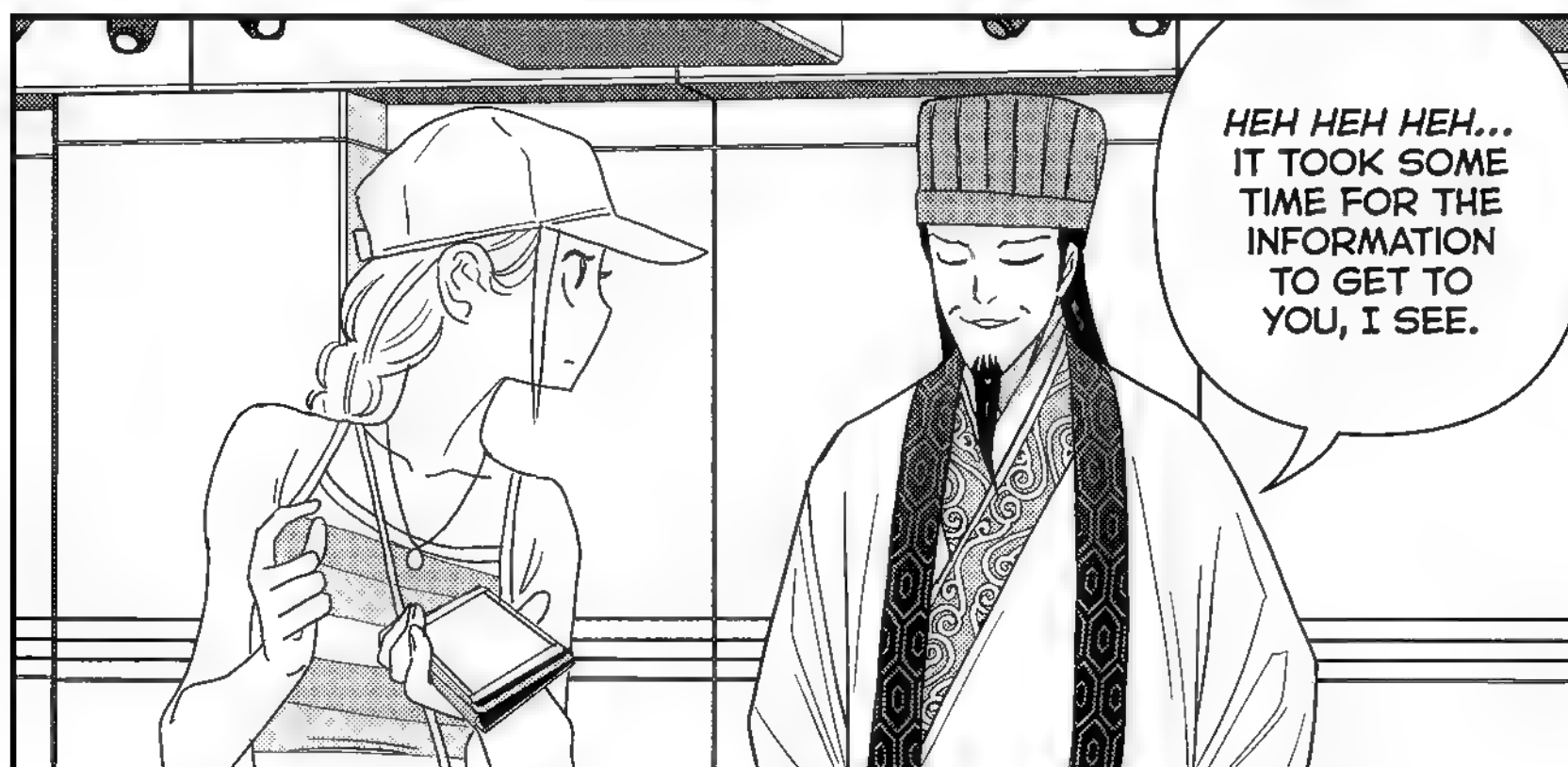
THAT
CHORE-
OGRAPHY
VIDEO FOR
"STAR TRIP"
THAT I UP-
LOADED...

...IS
TRENDING!



OH, YEAH!
WAY TO GO.
EVEN FAMOUS
PEOPLE ARE
DOIN' THE
DANCE.

SEE?!
500K
VIEWS!



HEH HEH HEH...
IT TOOK SOME
TIME FOR THE
INFORMATION
TO GET TO
YOU, I SEE.



I'VE
ALREADY
UPLOADED
MYSELF
ATTEMPTING
THE DANCE
AS WELL.

WHY'RE YOU SO
UNNECESSARILY
GOOD AT IT?!

YOUR VID
EVEN GOT
OVER 100K
VIEWS.





WOW!
YOU DIDN'T
SEE IT COMIN'
EITHER, HUH?

I DIDN'T THINK
THAT LADY EIKO
WOULD END UP
TRENDING ON
THIS POPULAR
APPLICATION,
DIKDOK.

HM...
ALTHOUGH
I SAID THAT
"OBSERVATION"
WOULD BE THE
MOST EFFECTIVE
MOVE...



ESPECIALLY
JAPANESE FADS.
THEY MOVE AS
FAST AS THE
BILLOWING
WAVES.

FAME AND
POPULARITY
COME AND
GO LIKE
THE TIDE.



WHETHER
WE MAKE USE
OF THIS OR NOT
WILL DETERMINE
OUR FUTURE
SUCCESSSES.

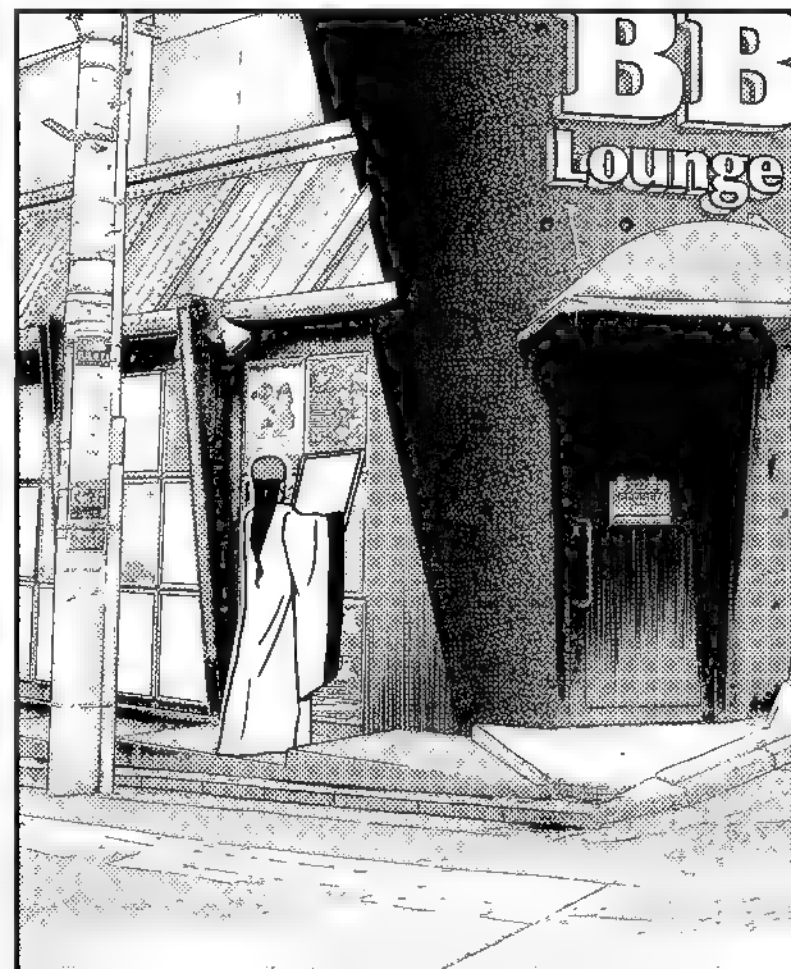
I HAVE IMMENSE
CONFIDENCE IN
READING THE
TIDES OF BATTLE.

RIGHT!
GO PLOT
AWAY!



SO...WHAT
NOW, MR.
TACTICIAN?

THERE'S
NO REASON
NOT TO MAKE
USE OF THIS
OPPORTUNITY.









IT'S BEEN SO
LONG SINCE I
LAST SANG AT
BB LOUNGE.



CHAPTER 109 What Is Desired



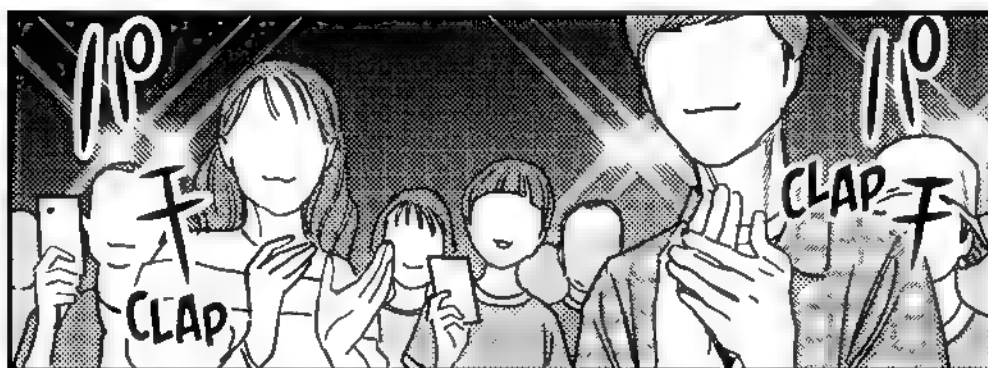
WEIRD...THERE
SEEM TO BE MORE
PEOPLE THAN USUAL.
MAYBE BECAUSE THE
VIDEO'S TRENDING?

IT DREW A WHOLE
DIFFERENT CROWD,
TOO.





**IF THIS IS
THEIR FIRST
TIME AT A CLUB,
THEN I WANNA
MAKE THIS FUN
FOR THEM!**



**WHOA! WE
GOT A NICE
BIG CROWD
IN HERE!**

**I CAN'T
STOP
SMILING!**



**Thanks for
coming,
everyone!**

**Let's make
the most of
this special
night!**



IT SEEMS LIKE
THIS APPLICATION
IS MADE TO
PROVIDE VIEWERS
WITH A MOMENT
OF JOY.

DIKDOK
IS SUCH A
FASCINATING
APPLICATION.



TO THINK THAT
A SMALL VIDEO
OF SEVERAL
SECONDS
COULD RESULT
IN SUCH A
GATHERING.



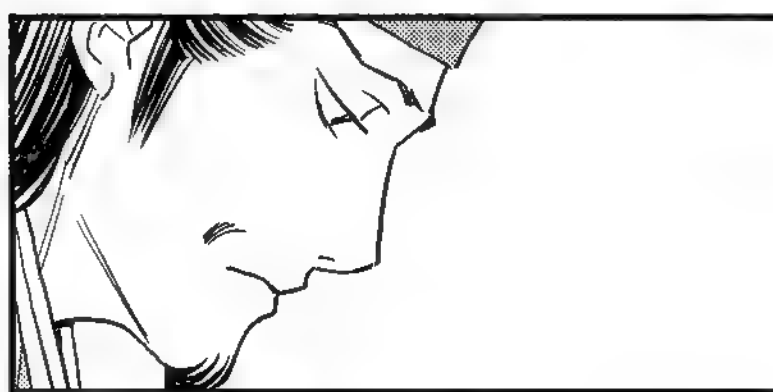
AN OLD MAN LIKE
ME CAN NEVER
UNDERSTAND HOW
THESE YOUNG'UNS
CAN FIND SEVERAL
SECONDS OF
VIDEOS SO
ENTERTAINING.

IT'S QUITE
THE TRENDY
TOOL THAT I
NEVER WOULD
HAVE IMAGINED
POSSIBLE IN
MY ERA.



IMAGINE
WHAT?

IT'S
NOTHING BUT
A FRUITLESS
WISH, BUT I
SOMETIMES
IMAGINE...



SIGH...



You need not come visit your dear old mother.

Be proud and work for him, my son.

Liu Xuan is a man of many talents. The people all adore him.

...IF WE HAD THINGS LIKE "CELLPHONES" IN MY TIME, THEN THE WE WOULD NEVER HAVE FALLEN PREY TO THE "COUNTERFEIT STRATEGY."

AH, THE COUNTERFEIT STRATEGY, WHERE XU SHU WAS DECEIVED BY A LETTER FROM SOMEONE IMPERSONATING HIS MOTHER AND RETURNED TO HER SIDE!



I LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT EVEN SO, I WOULD HAVE BEEN FATED TO SERVE MY LORD...

AND YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN RECOMMENDED TO LIU BEI AS A RESULT, NO?



BUT... IF CAO CAO HAD NEVER USED THE COUNTERFEIT STRATEGY, THEN XU SHU WOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT LIU BEI'S ARMY.



COUNTLESS TIMES HAVE I FOUND MYSELF WISHING THAT XU SHU HAD REMAINED BY MY LORD'S SIDE.

HUMANS ARE CREATURES OF GREED.



HEY,
NO NEED
TO MAKE
THAT FACE.

EIKO
MANAGED
TO CARVE
HER OWN
LEGEND IN
SUMMER
SONIA.

WE MUST MAKE
GOOD USE OF
THIS GATHERING
OF GUESTS THAT
THE "TRENDING
VIDEO" HAS
GRANTED US.

AT ANY
RATE, WE
ARE NOW IN
THE REIWA
ERA.*

*JAPAN'S REIWA ERA: MAY 1, 2019 - PRESENT.



IT'S
ABOUT
TIME...

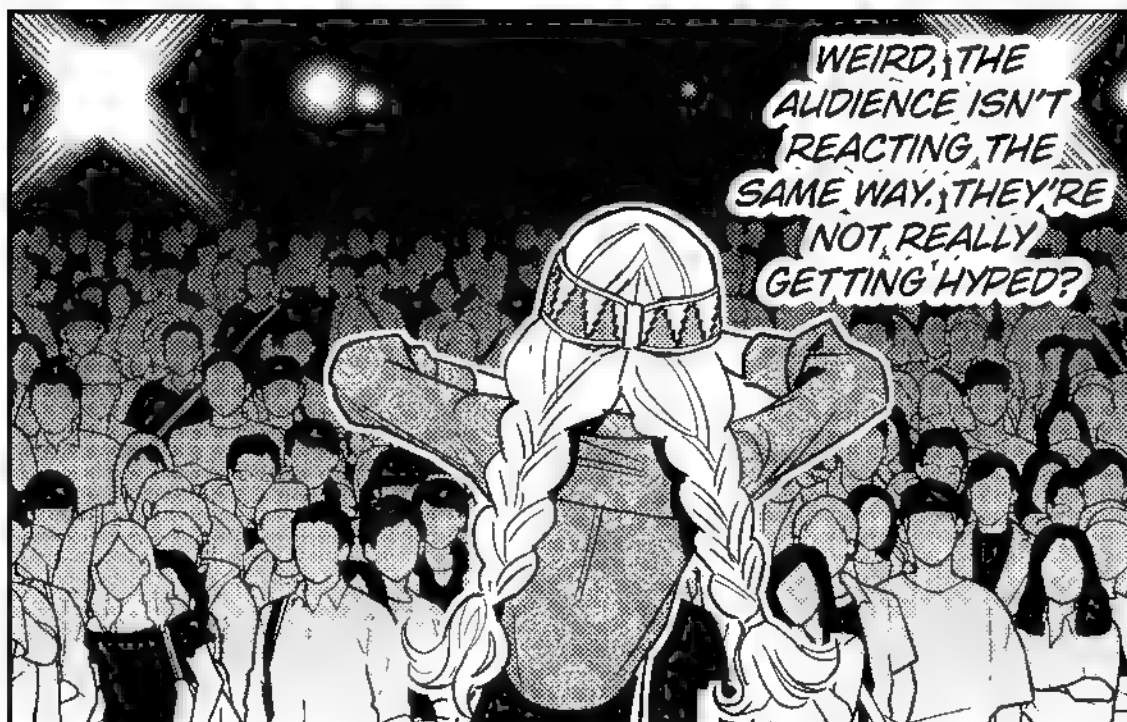


THINK OF THIS
AS A LUCKY
SHIP THAT WE
MANAGED TO
BOARD.



...THE PROBLEM
OF THIS ERA IS
ABOUT TO REAR
ITS UGLY HEAD.

WHAT
PROBLEM
...?

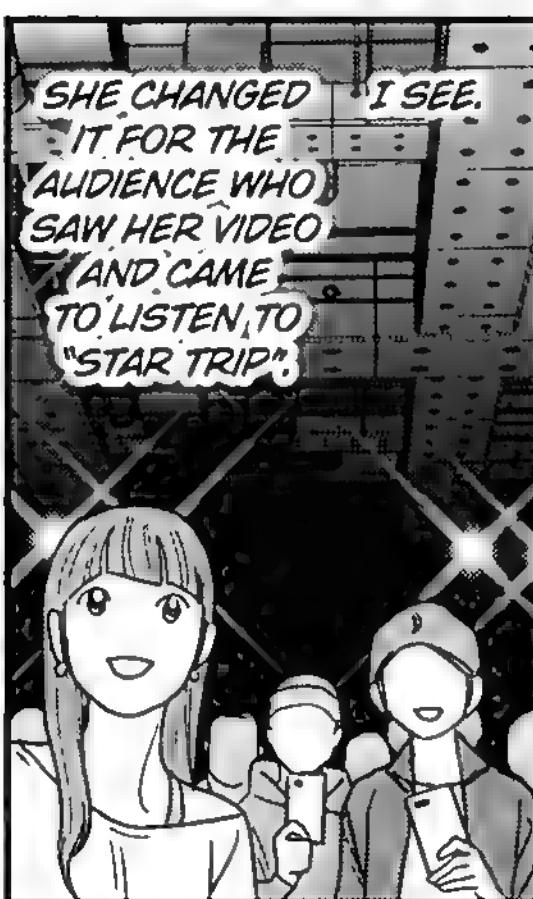


STAR TRIP!



I
GOTTA
RECORD
THIS!

THERE
IT IS!
THE
CHORUS!

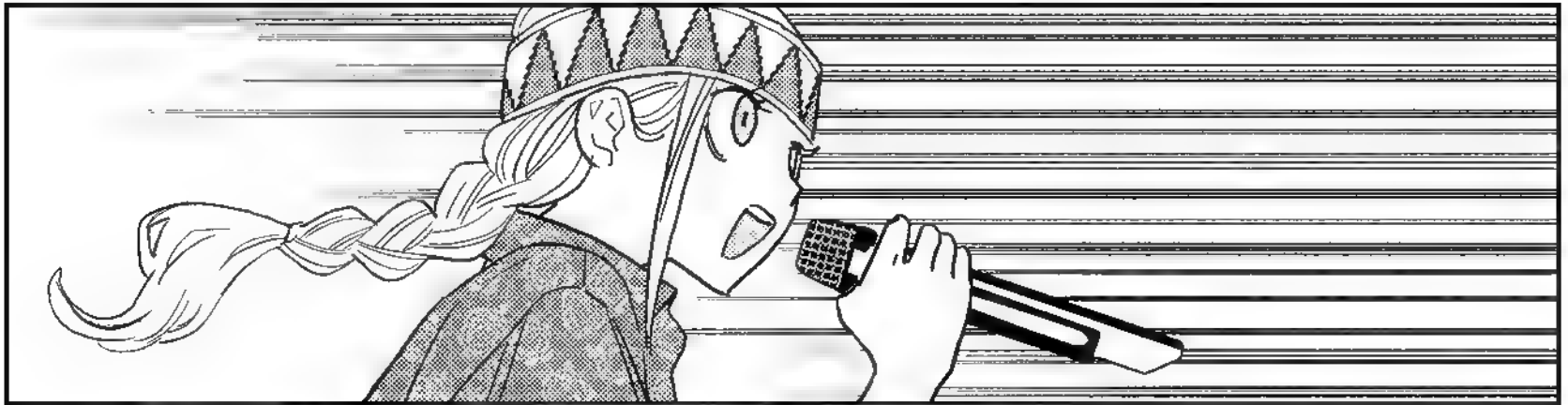
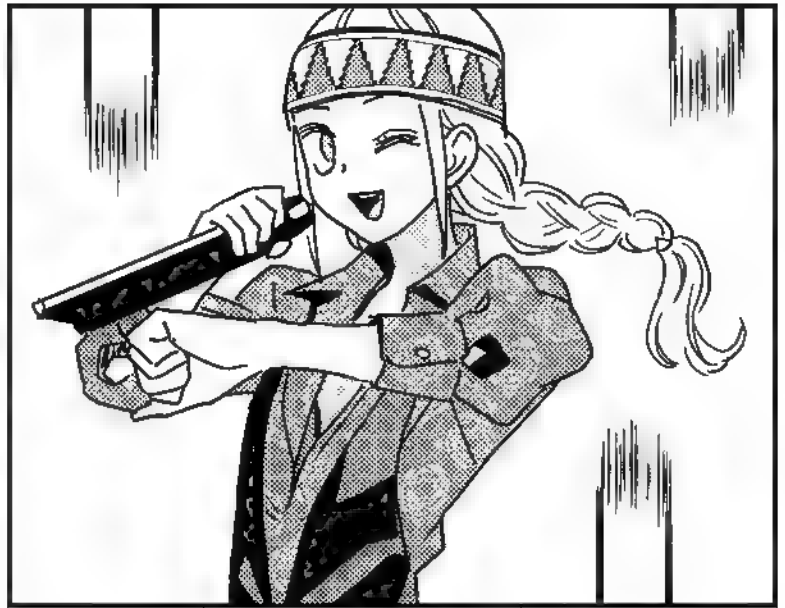
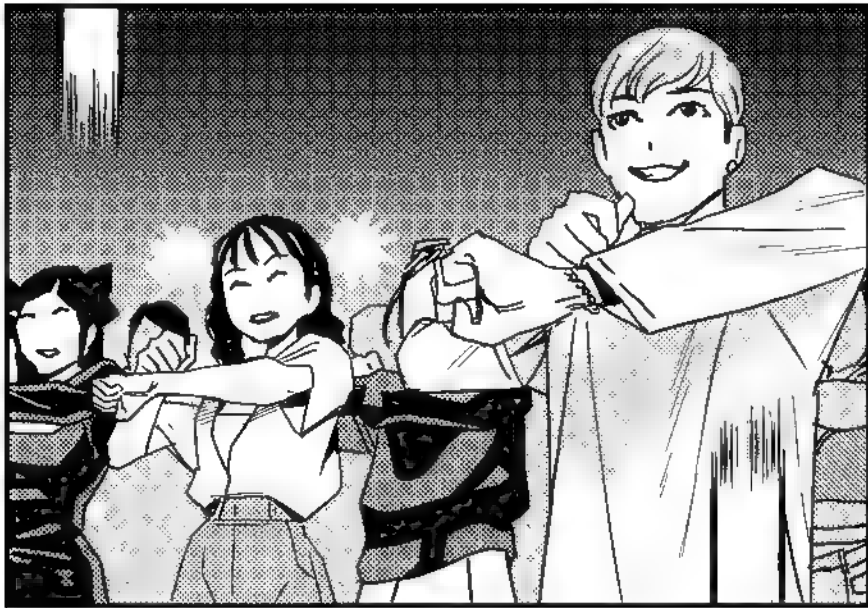


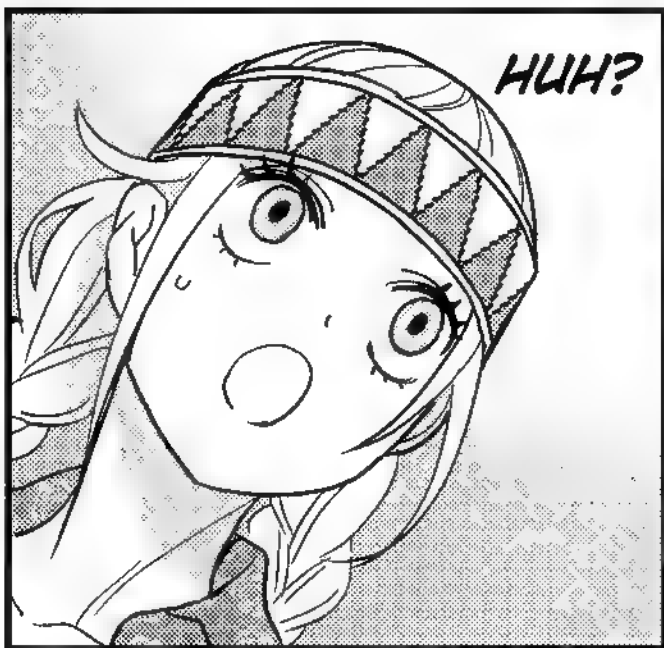
SHE CHANGED
IT FOR THE
AUDIENCE WHO
SAW HER VIDEO
AND CAME
TO LISTEN TO
"STAR TRIP".

I SEE.

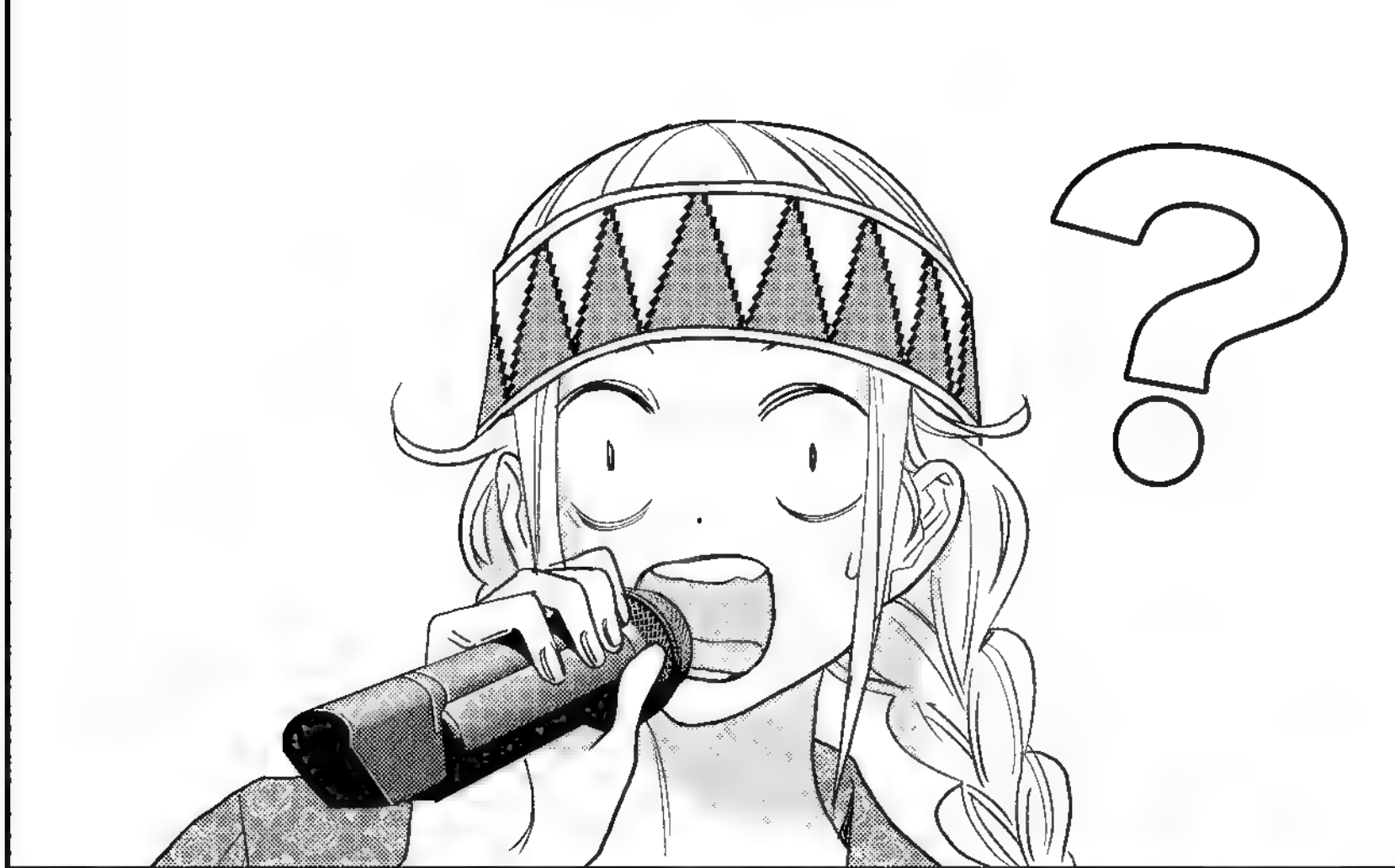


SHE
CHANGED
THE
TRACK
LIST?!









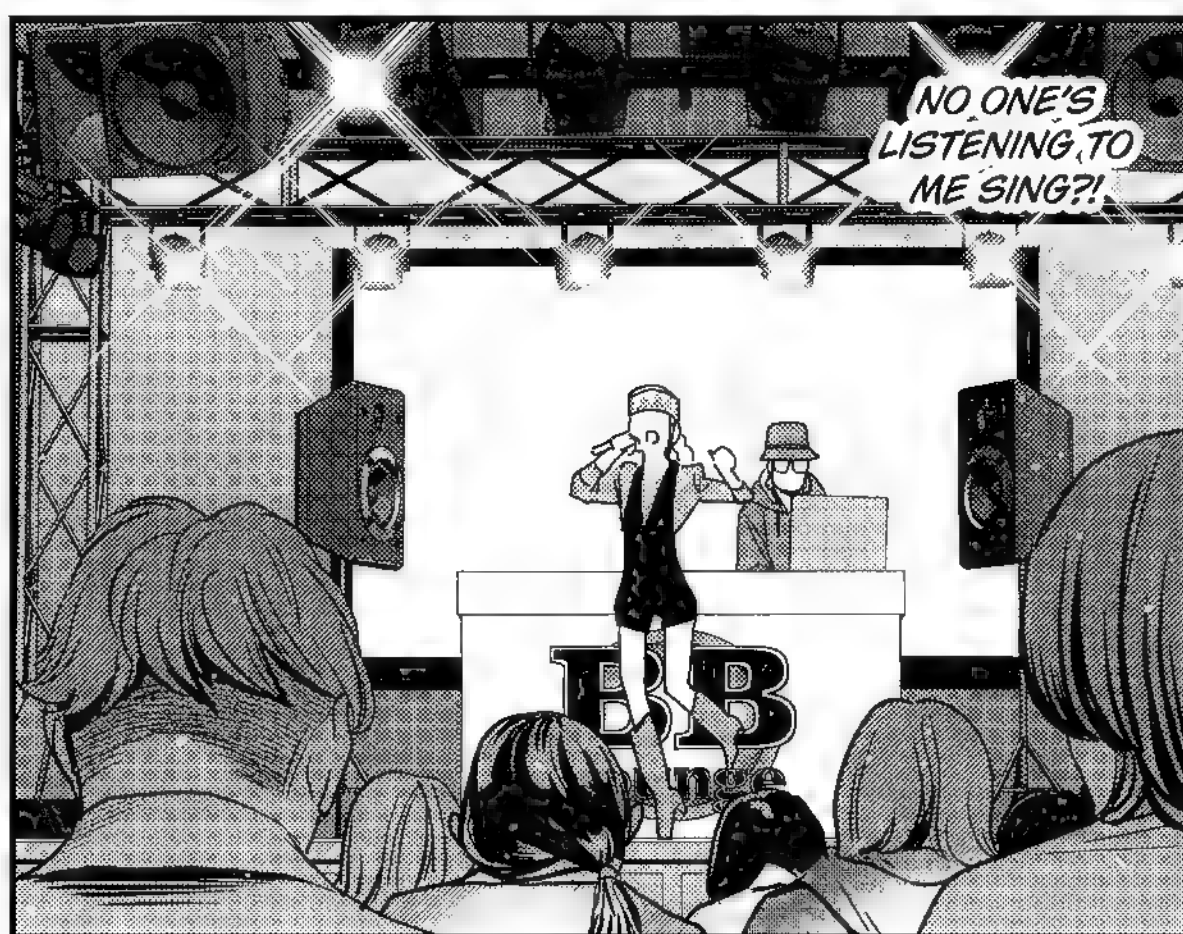
THEY ALL
TURNED TO
THEIR PHONES
THE SECOND
THE CHORUS
ENDED!



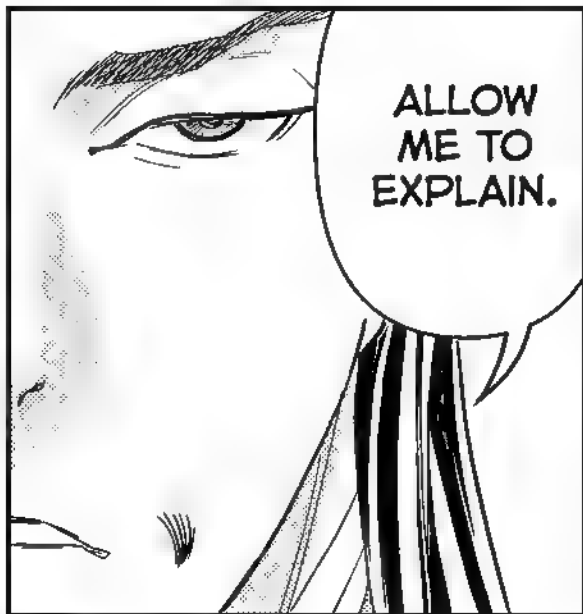
WHAT THE?!
WEREN'T
THEY ALL
JUMPIN'
AND SINGIN'
A SECOND
AGO?!



WHY NOT?!



NO ONE'S
LISTENING TO
ME SING?!



ALLOW
ME TO
EXPLAIN.



KONGMING...
DID YOU
KNOW THIS
WAS GONNA
HAPPEN?

WHAT'S
GOIN' ON
HERE?!



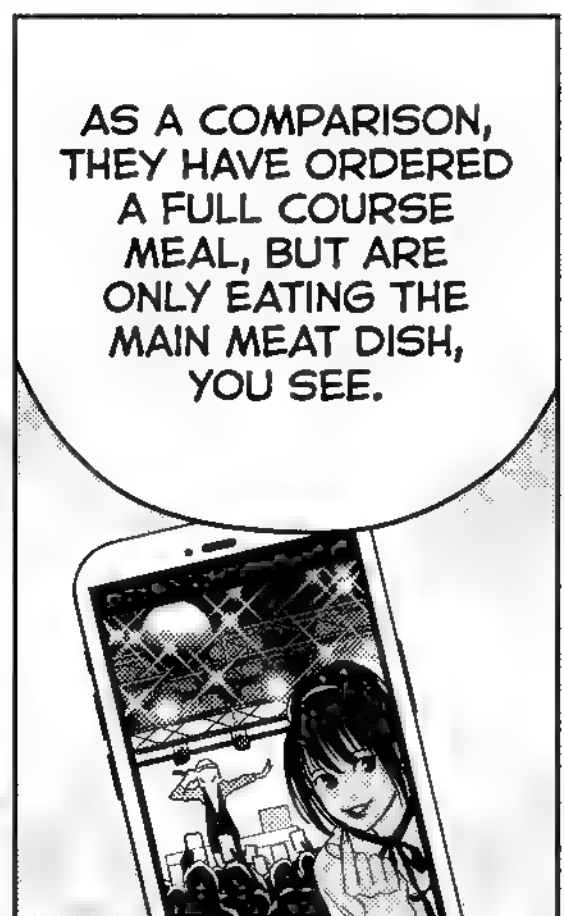
THEY'RE
ONLY HERE TO
SEE THE PORTION
OF THE SONG
THEY'VE SEEN
ON DIKDOK.

THE AUDIENCE
THAT GATHERED
HERE TODAY
NEVER LISTENED
TO LADY EIKO'S
FULL SONG.



THEY'RE
ONLY HERE TO
RECORD A FEW
SECONDS OF
VIDEO?

YOU COULD
SAY THAT THIS
IS THE HARMFUL
AFTEREFFECT
OF REVELING
IN PASSING
MOMENTS
OF JOY.



AS A COMPARISON,
THEY HAVE ORDERED
A FULL COURSE
MEAL, BUT ARE
ONLY EATING THE
MAIN MEAT DISH,
YOU SEE.



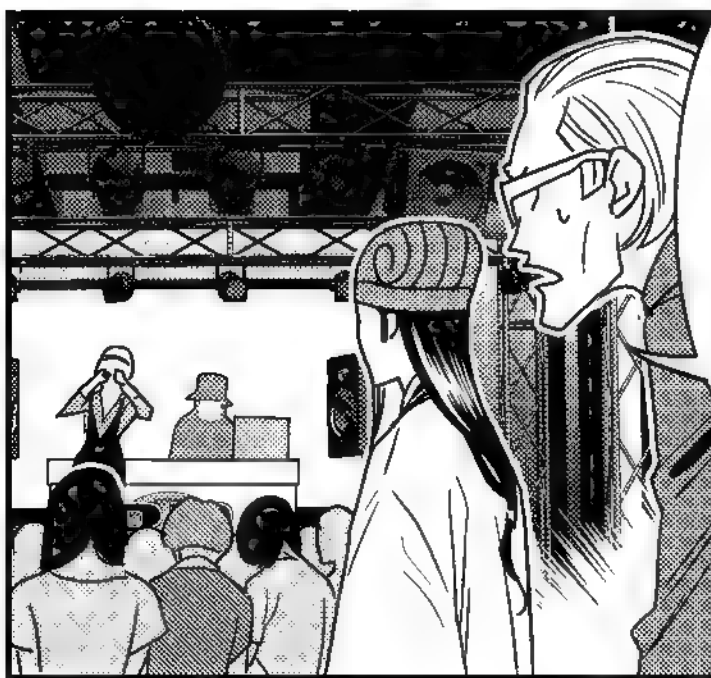
THE AUDIENCE
IS MERELY
INTERESTED IN
THE CHORUS
OF A SONG.

THIS
IS A PROBLEM
THAT HAS BEEN
PLAGUING THE
MUSIC INDUSTRY
IN THE PAST
FEW YEARS.

THEY DO NOT
CARE ABOUT
ANY OTHER
MUSIC.

IT COULD BE
SAID THAT THIS
IS OUR NEW ERA'S
WAY OF ENJOYING
CONCERTS.

OR ELSE
EIKO'LL LOSE
ALL THE PEOPLE
GATHERED
HERE!



QUIT WITH
THE LECTURE
AND THINK OF
SOMETHIN'
TURN THIS
AROUND!
HURRY!

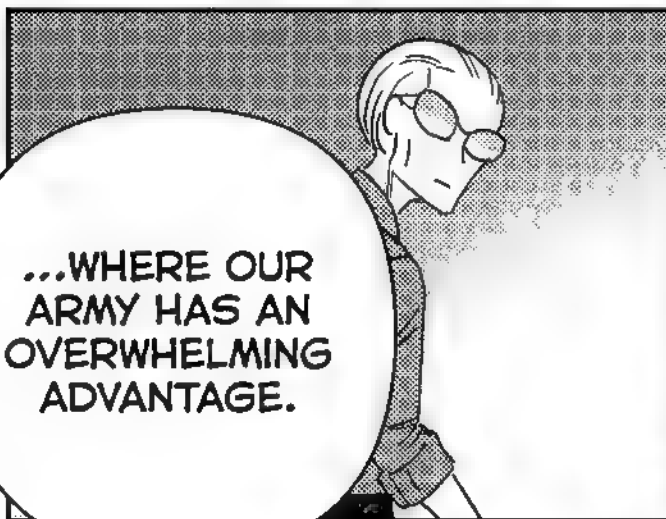


BB LOUNGE
IS OUR HOME
GROUND...



AT THIS RATE,
EVEN THOSE
GUYS WHO LOVE
THE CLUB SCENE
ARE GONNA GET
PUT OFF BY
THE MOOD!

THINK OF
SOMETHING...?
HM...

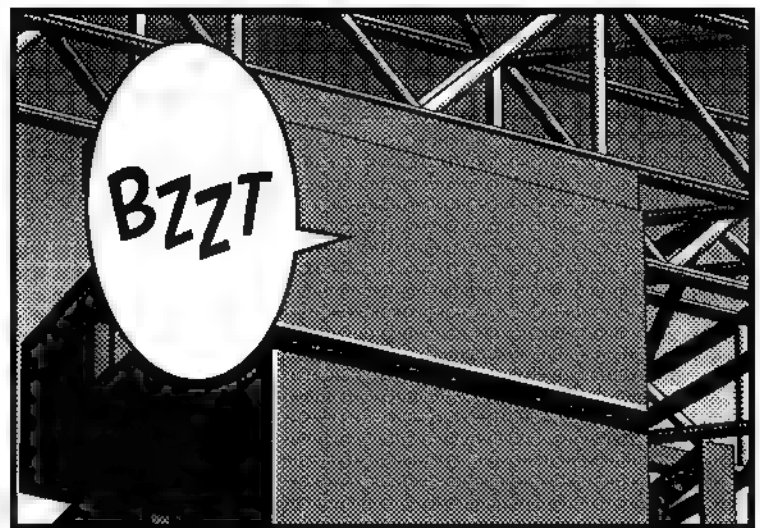
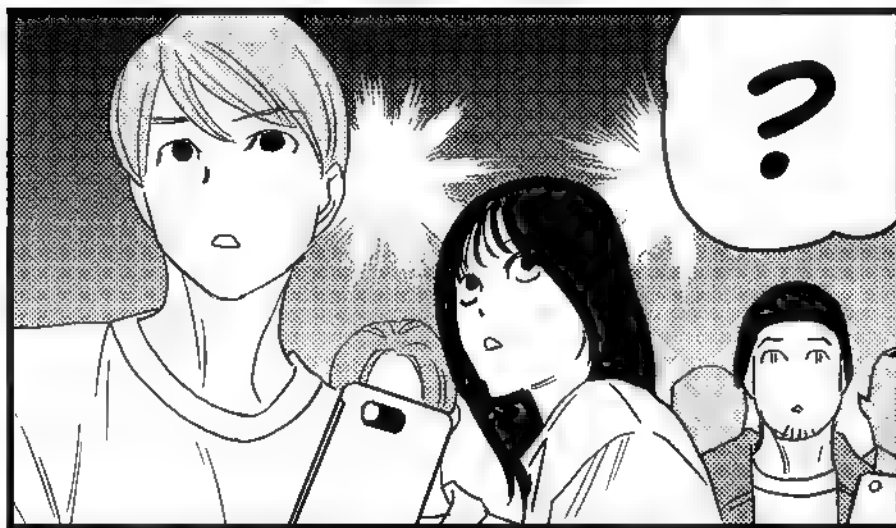


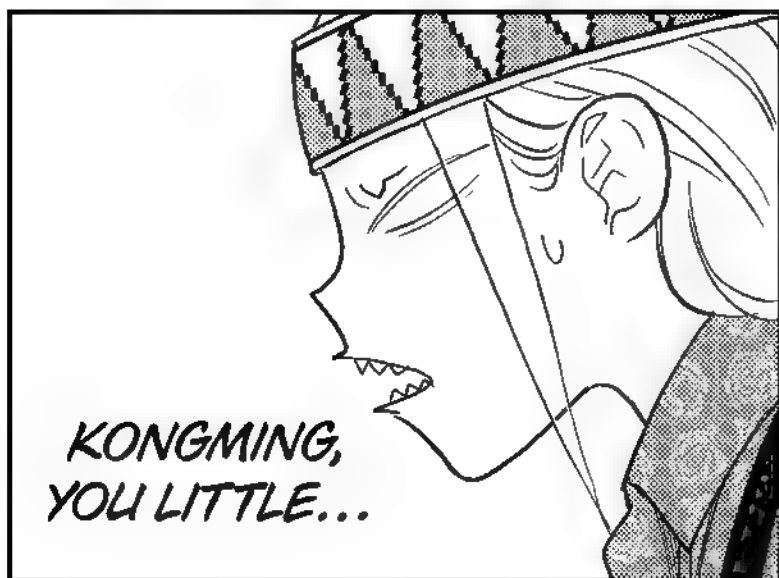
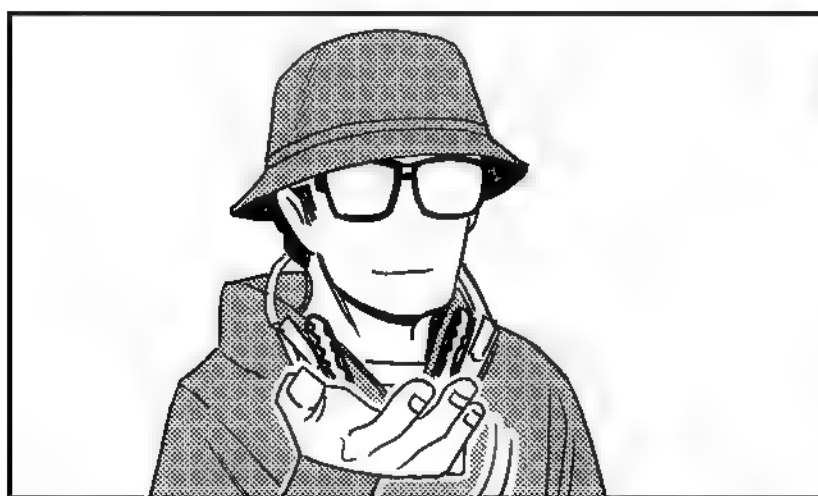
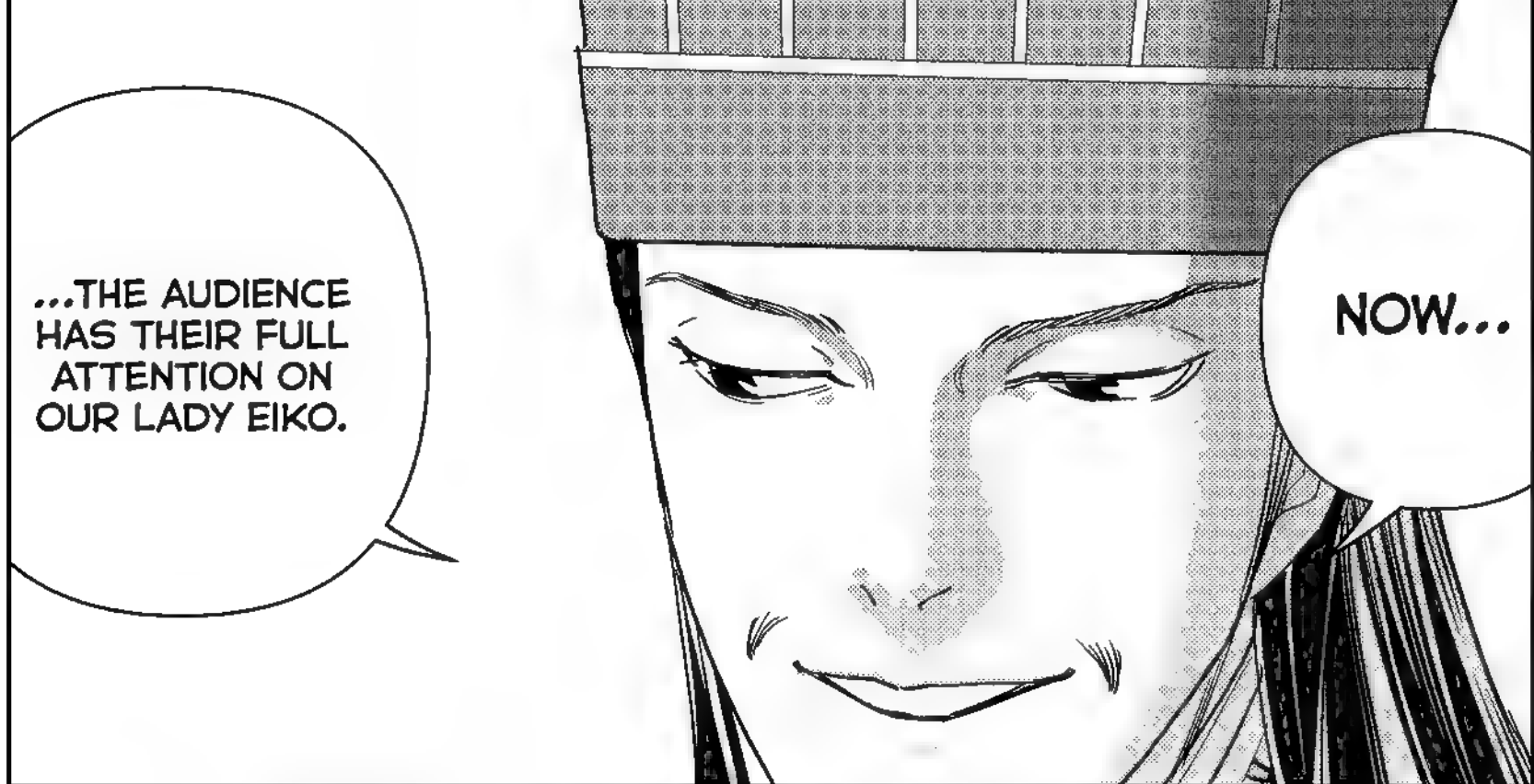
...WHERE OUR
ARMY HAS AN
OVERWHELMING
ADVANTAGE.

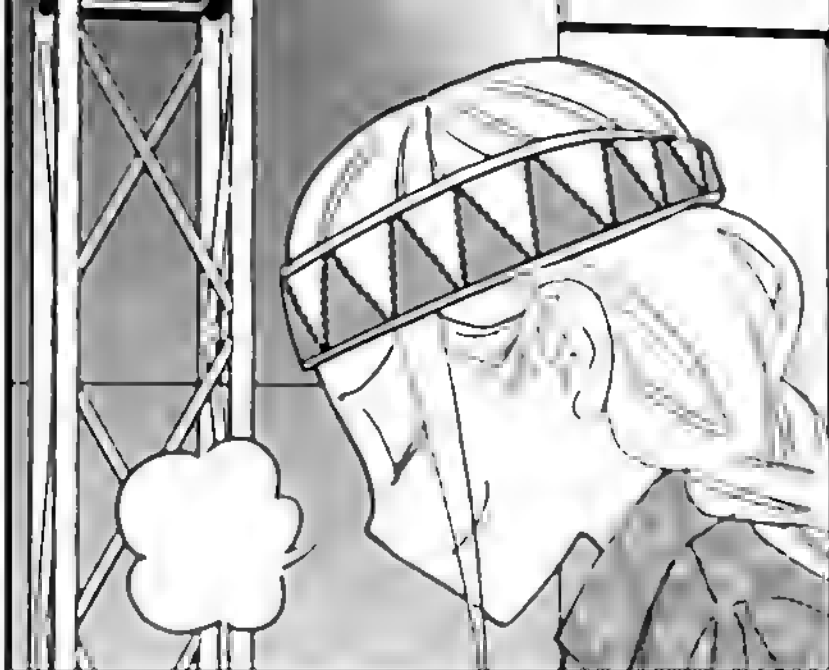


FURTHERMORE...
I AM ONE OF THE
MANY WHO BELIEVE
IN LADY EIKO AND
HER VOICE.

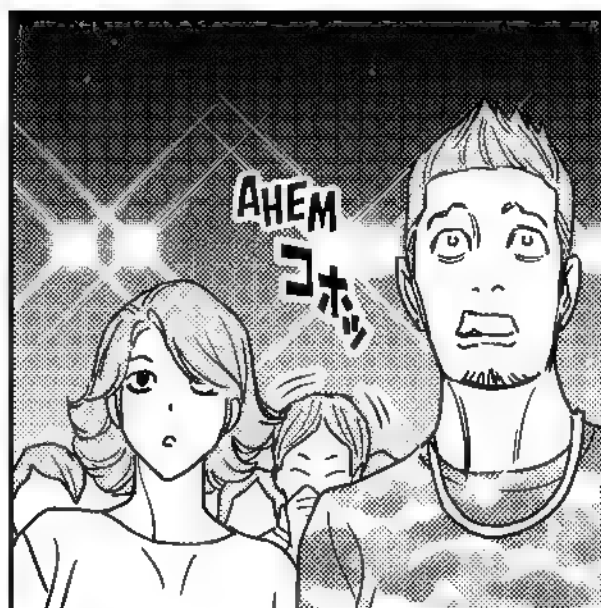
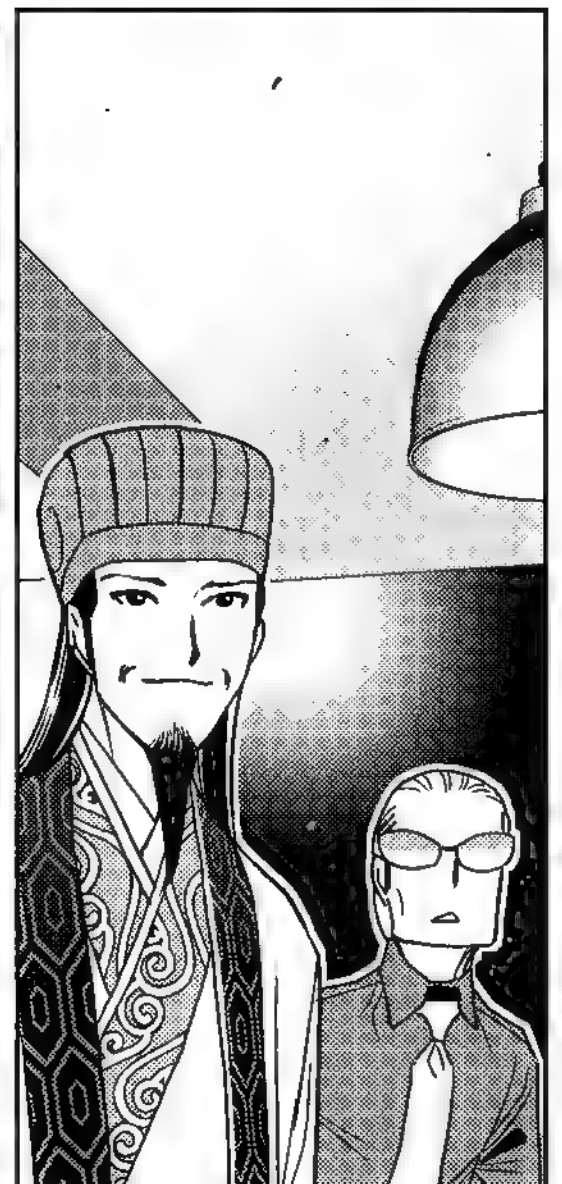
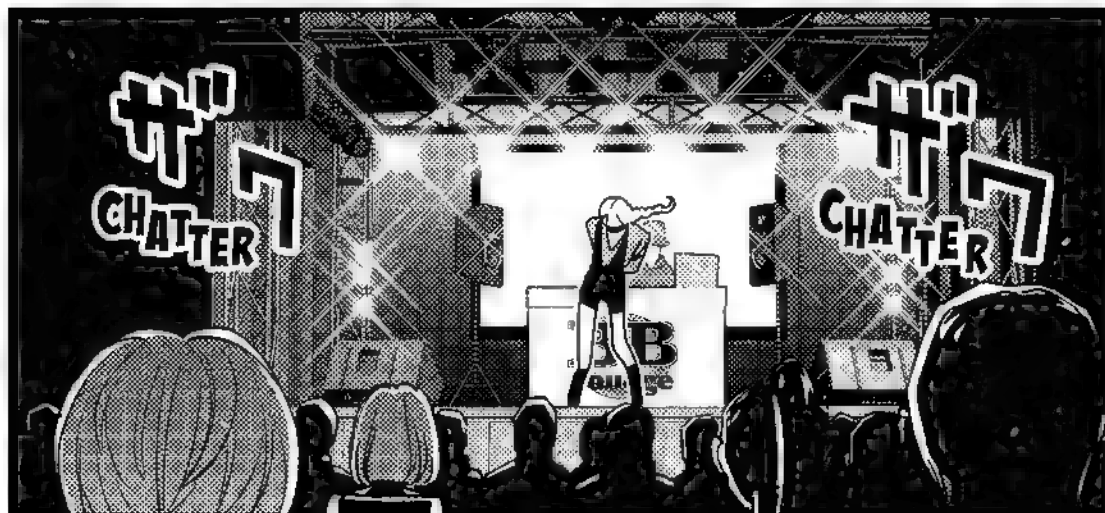
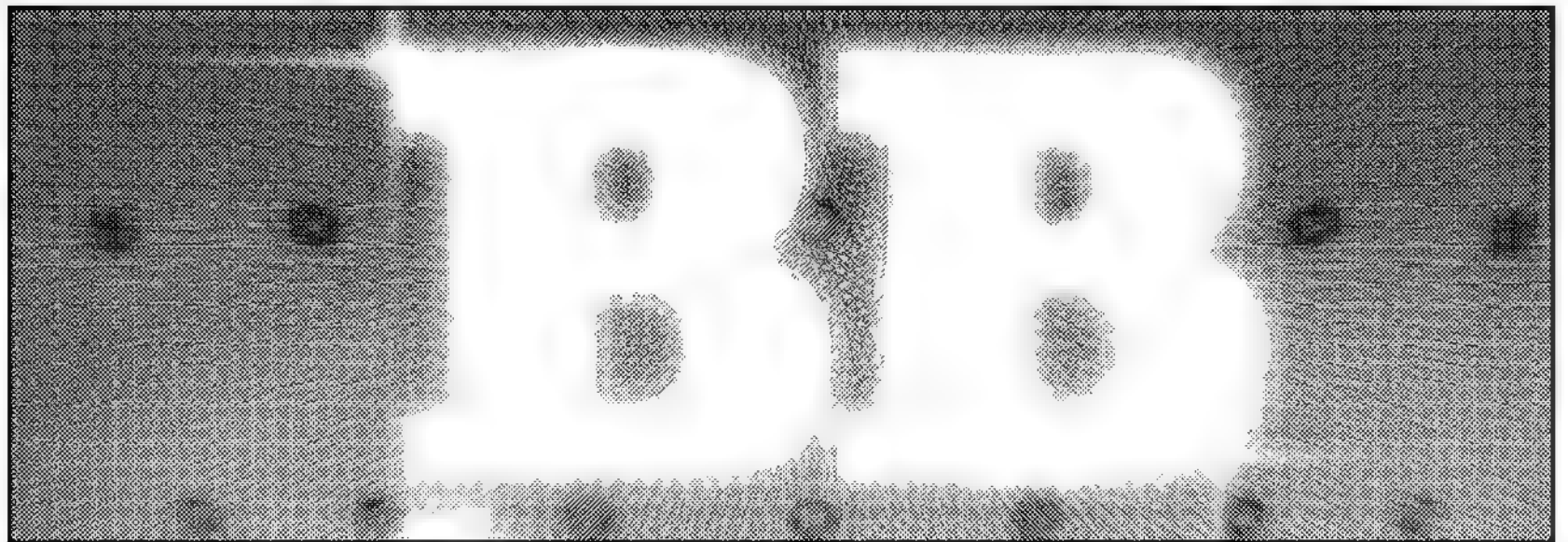
HUH?

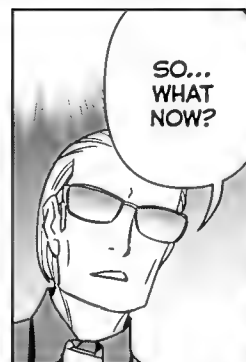
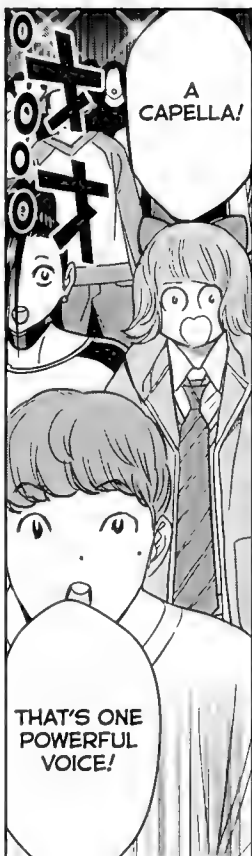


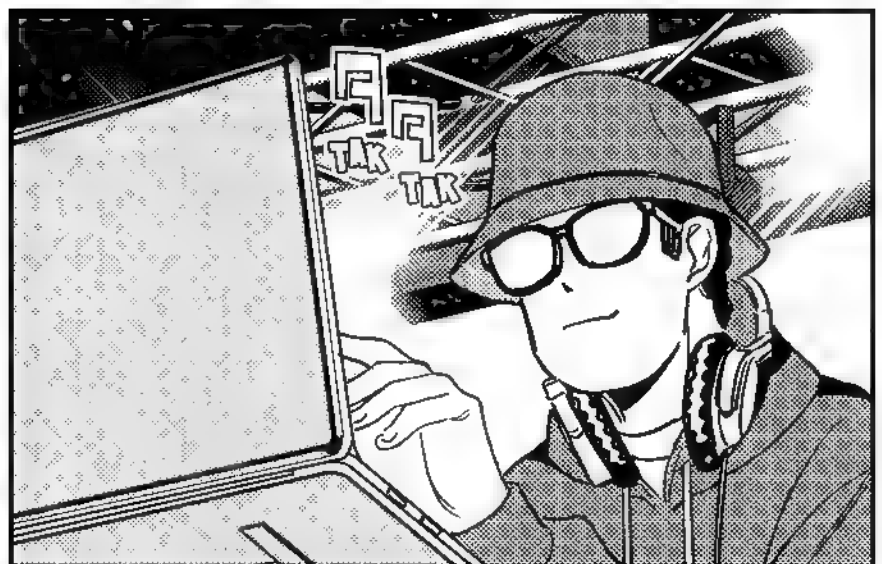
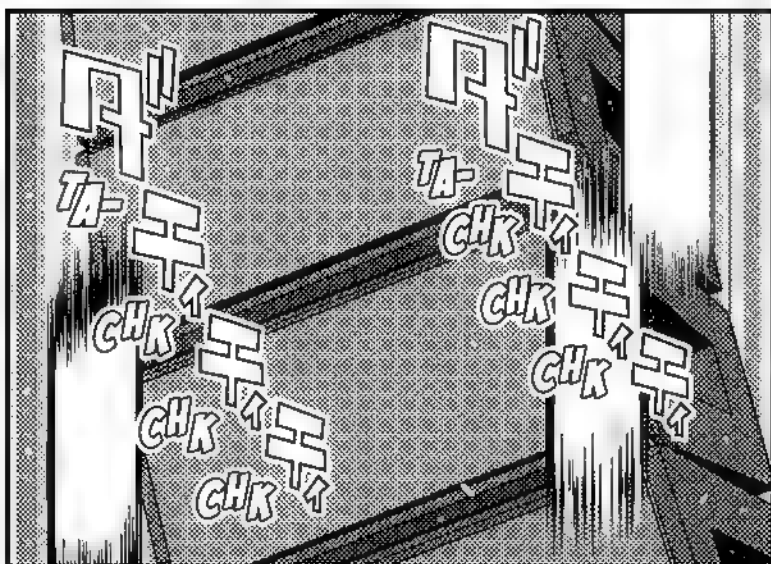
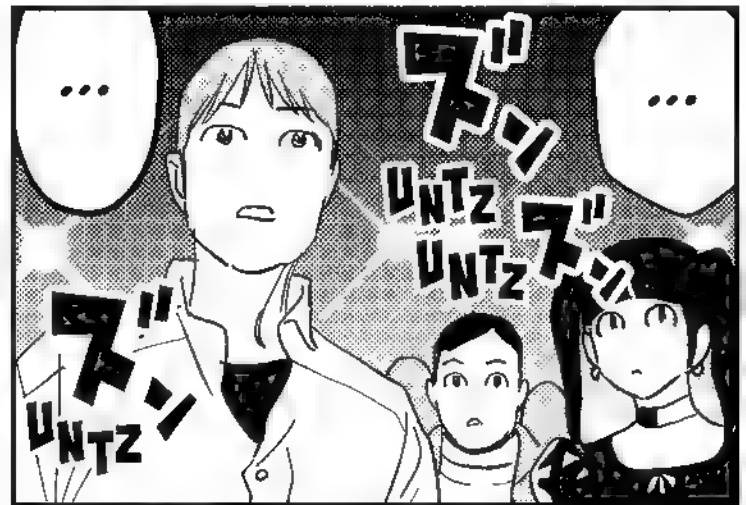
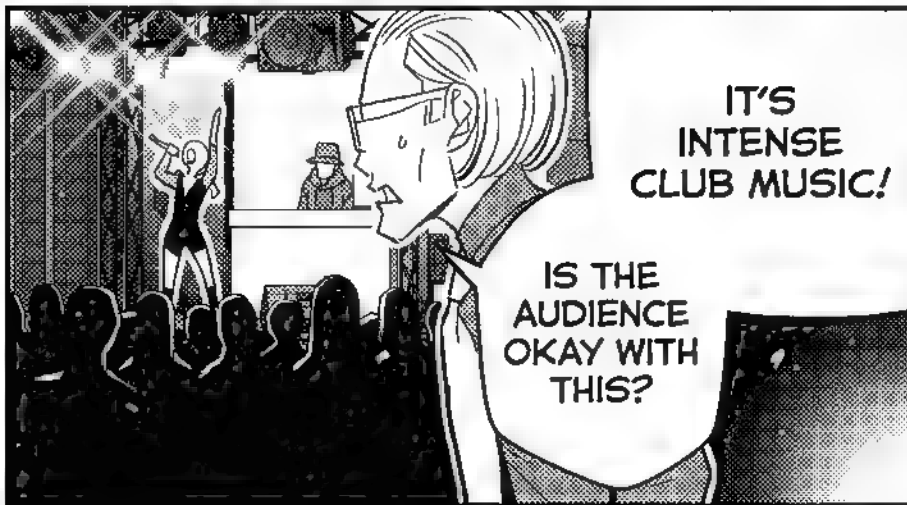








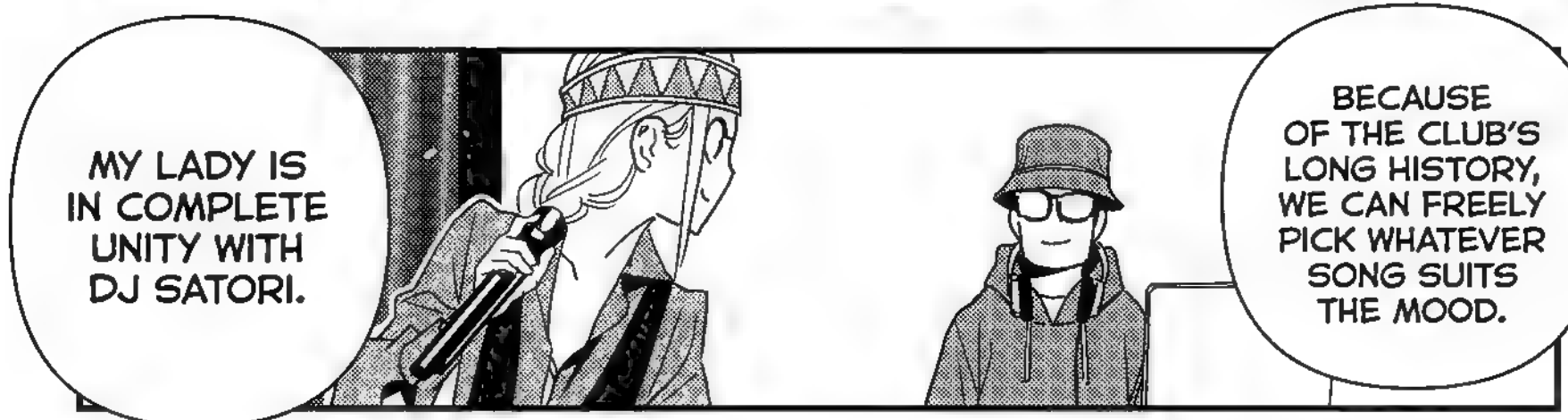






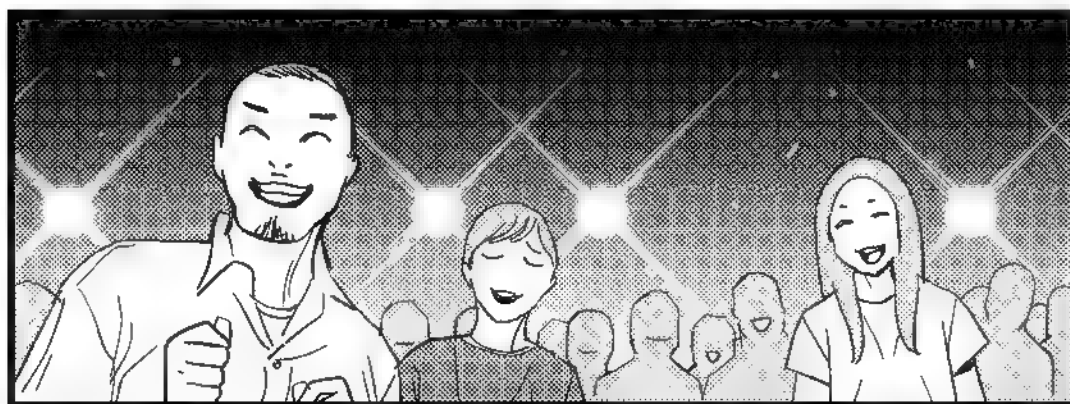
THERE IS NO
PREDETERMINED
SET LIST. FLUIDITY
AND ADAPTABILITY
ARE A MUSIC
CLUB'S GREATEST
ASSETS.

A CHANGE
IN THE MUSIC
THAT EXCITES
THE AUDIENCE
AND CREATE
THE ATMO-
SPHERE OF
THE NIGHT.



MY LADY IS
IN COMPLETE
UNITY WITH
DJ SATORI.

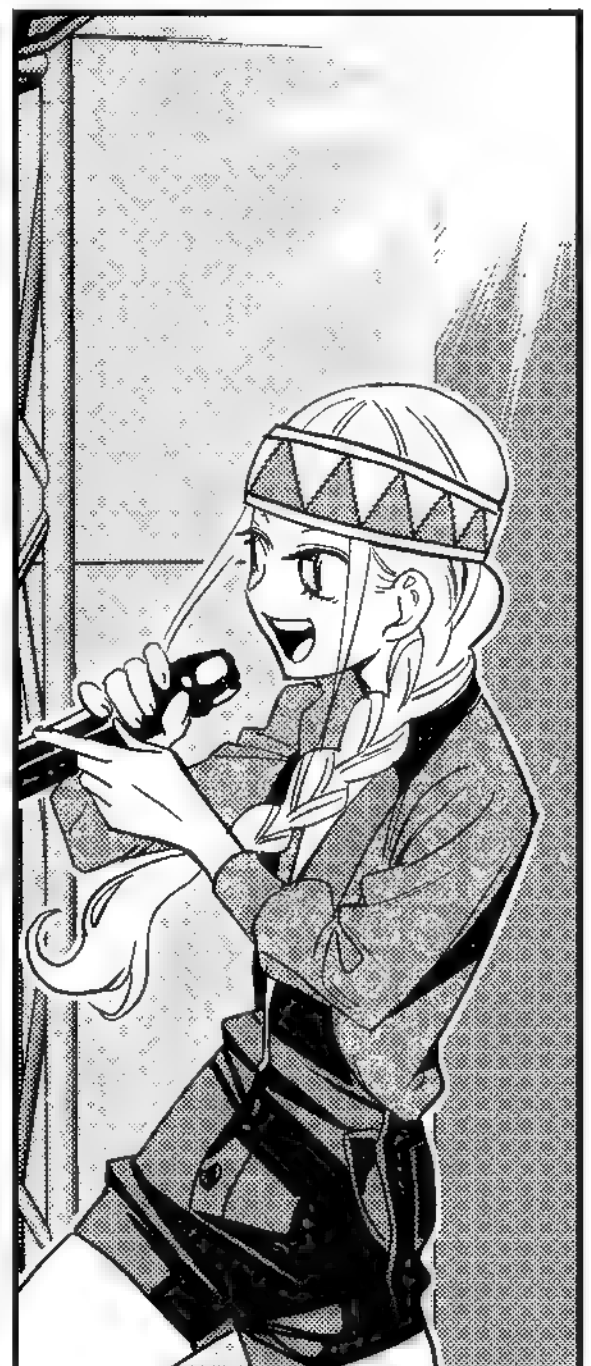
BECAUSE
OF THE CLUB'S
LONG HISTORY,
WE CAN FREELY
PICK WHATEVER
SONG SUITS
THE MOOD.

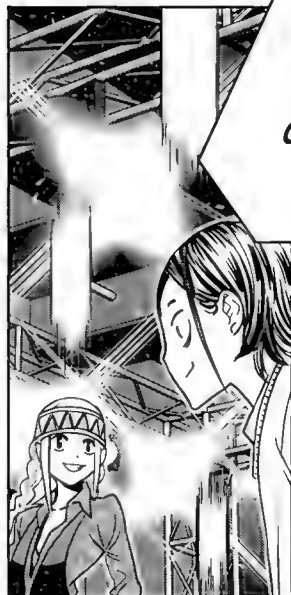


WELL, WE
HAD TO BE
SURE THIS
WOULD
EXCITE THE
GUESTS...



THIS
IS A
GOOD
PICK.





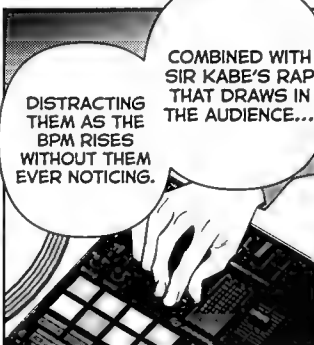
You guys
ready to bring
down the house,
BB Lounge?!



Yo Yo Yo!

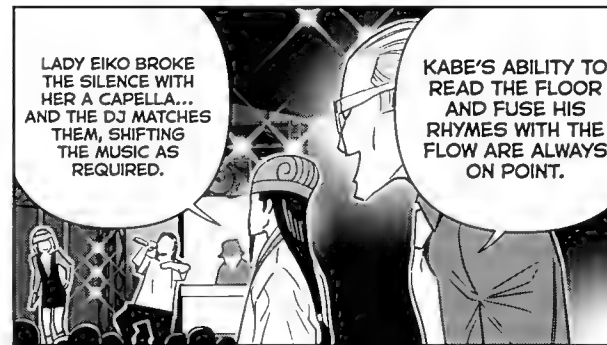


LASTLY, MIX
IN A LITTLE
ALCOHOLIC
MAGIC, AND...



DISTRACTING
THEM AS THE
BPM RISES
WITHOUT THEM
EVER NOTICING.

COMBINED WITH
SIR KABE'S RAP
THAT DRAWS IN
THE AUDIENCE...




LADY EIKO BROKE
THE SILENCE WITH
HER A CAPELLA...
AND THE DJ MATCHES
THEM, SHIFTING
THE MUSIC AS
REQUIRED.

KABE'S ABILITY TO
READ THE FLOOR
AND FUSE HIS
RHYMES WITH THE
FLOW ARE ALWAYS
ON POINT.





**...THE PHONES IN
THEIR HANDS WILL
BE COMPLETELY
FORGOTTEN.**



THE MUSIC
WILL SWAY THEIR
MINDS TO ELATION,
EXTENDING A
MOMENT OF
DELIGHT INTO
ETERNAL JOY.


ONCE THEY'RE
THIS EXCITED, IT
WILL NOT MATTER
WHETHER THEY
RECOGNIZE THE
SONG OR NOT.



YES,
WELL...



YOU'RE
TALKIN' A
LOT MORE
THAN USUAL
TODAY.

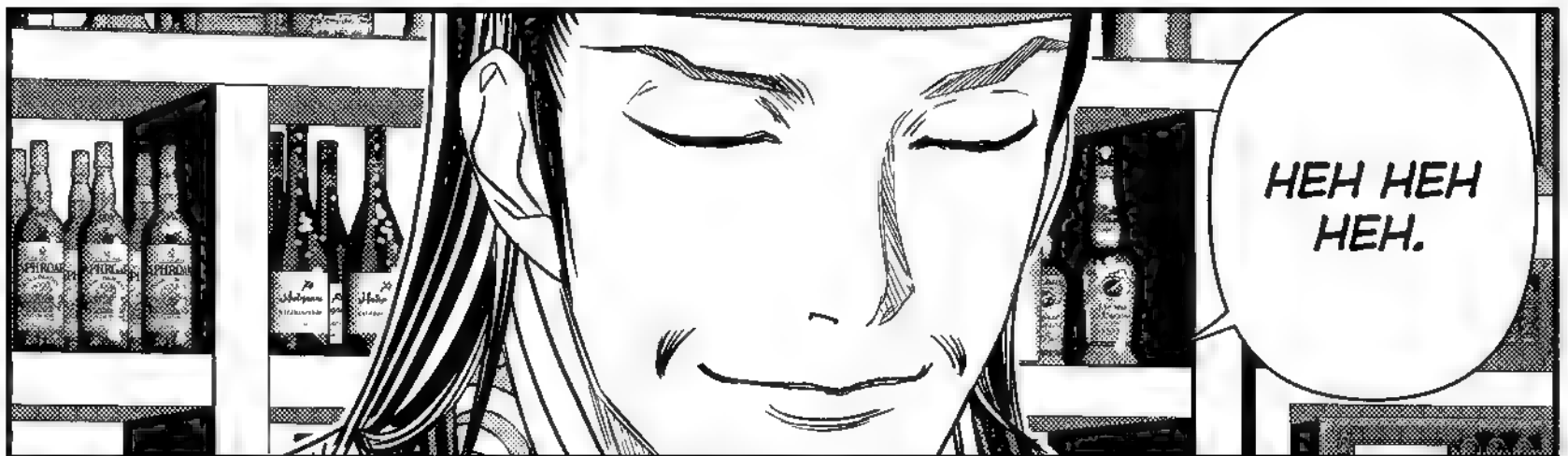
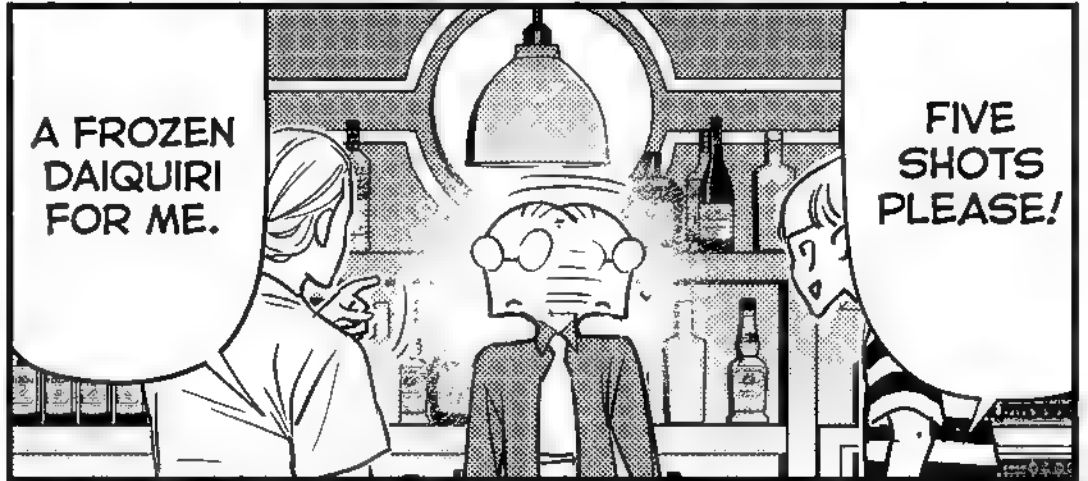


THEY CAME
ALL THIS WAY
AND STEPPED INTO
BB LOUNGE. I
WOULD LIKE TO
SEND THEM OFF
WITH NEW
DISCOVERIES
AND JOYS.

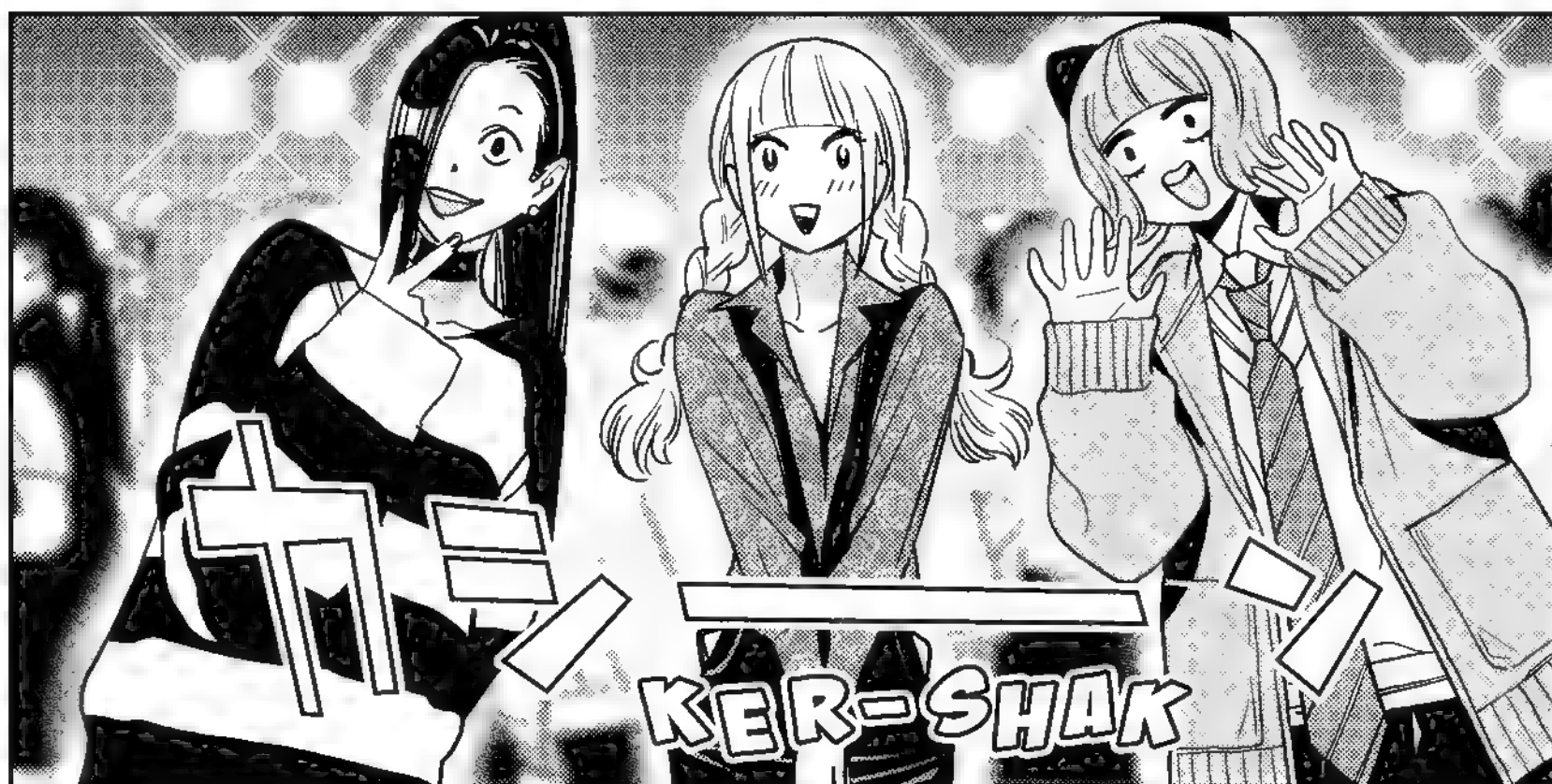
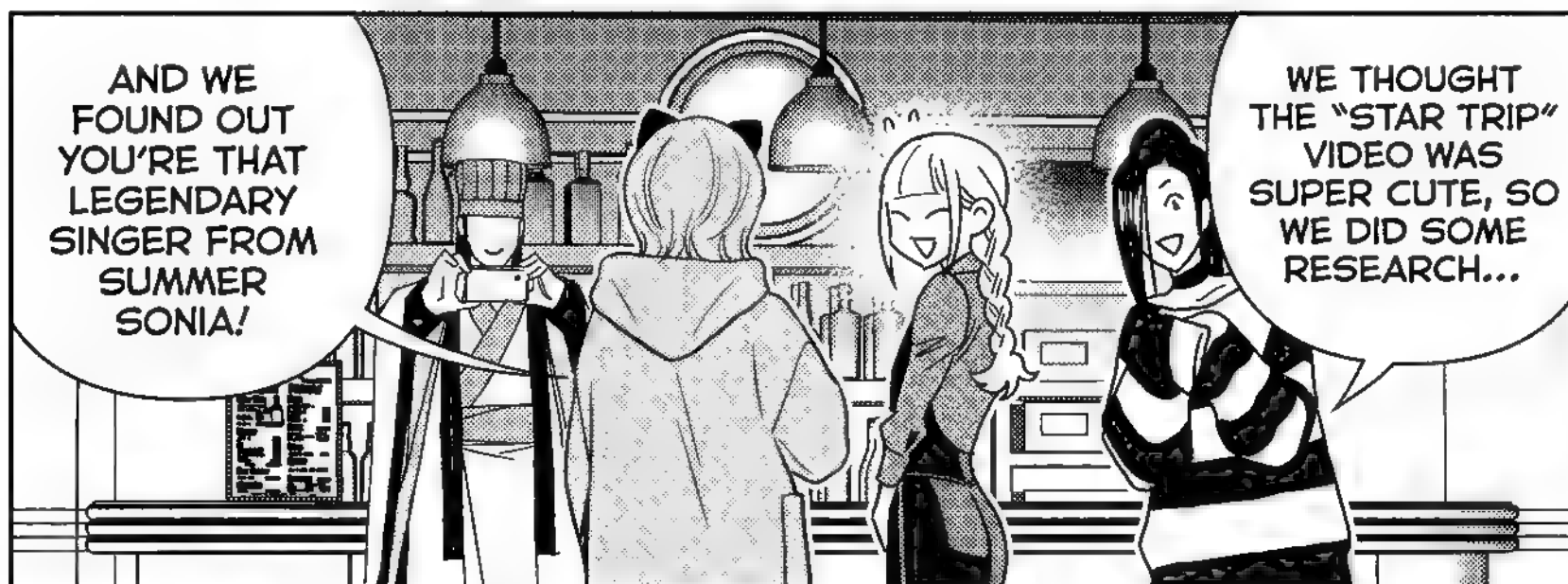
WITH HOW THINGS
ARE THESE DAYS,
IT'D BE NICE TO
LET 'EM ENJOY THE
UNUSUAL KINDA
ENTERTAINMENT
YOU CAN FIND
IN CLUBS.



ENCOUNTERING
MUSIC HAS
CHANGED MY
VERY VALUES
IN LIFE.









Y-YOU
REALLY
THINK
SO?

IT'S
TRUE,
THOUGH!

YOU
SHOULD
BE MORE
CONFIDENT
IN YOUR-
SELF.



...IN ALL
THE THINGS I
MANAGED TO
ACCOMPLISH!

I'LL BE
CONFIDENT...



...

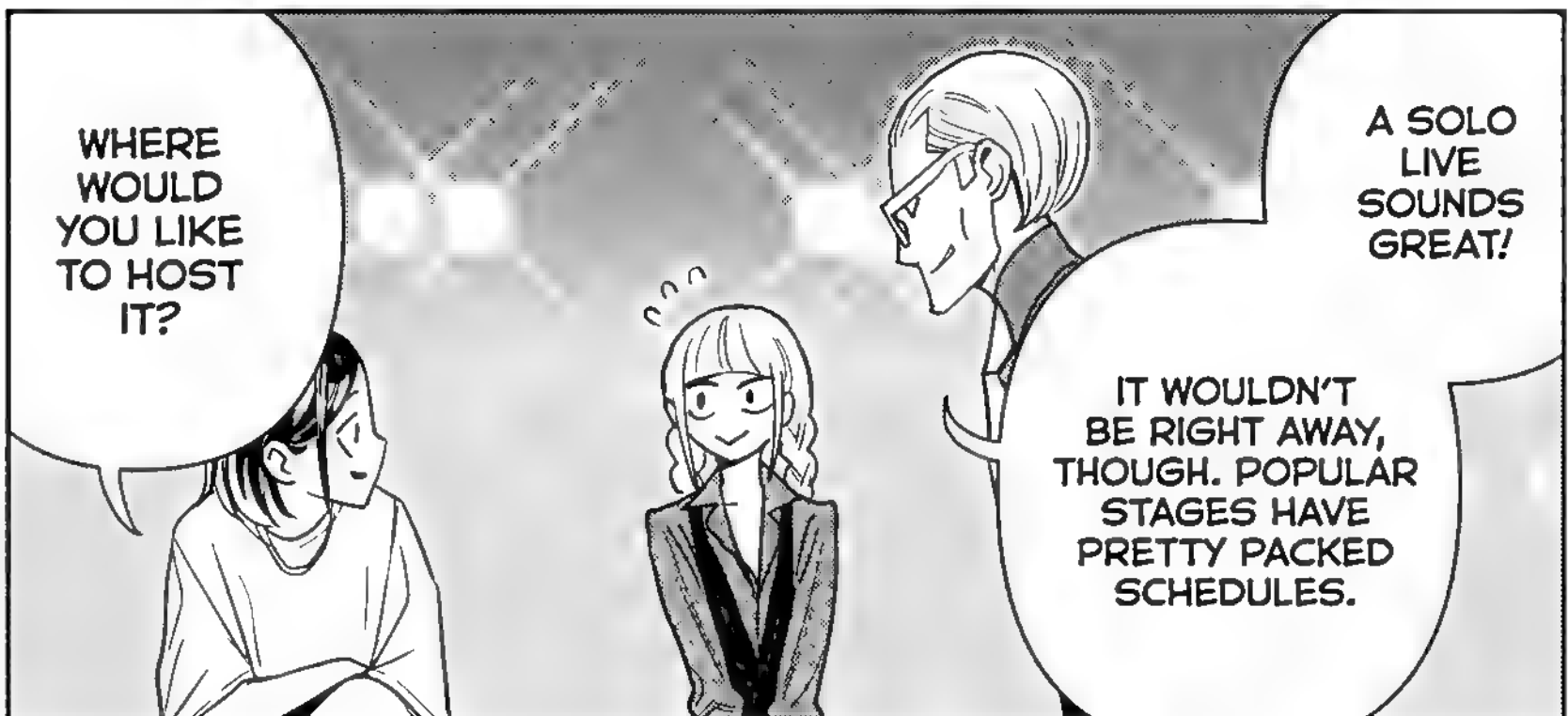


YEAH...
OKAY!



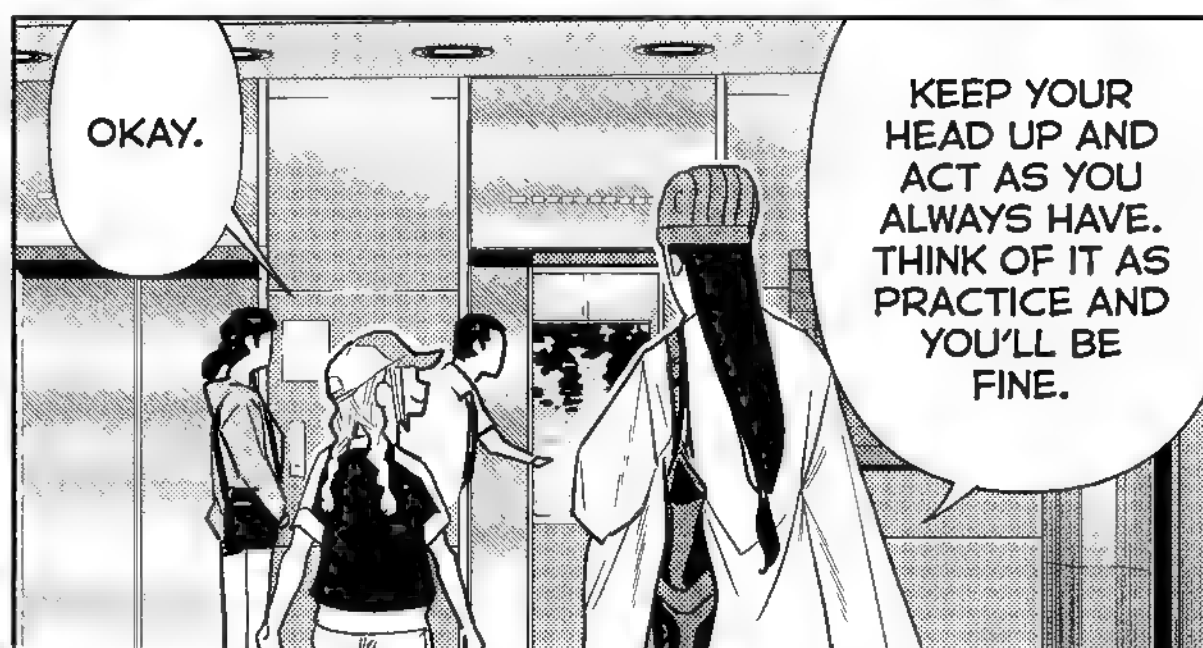
HEY,
DON'T
READ MY
MIND!

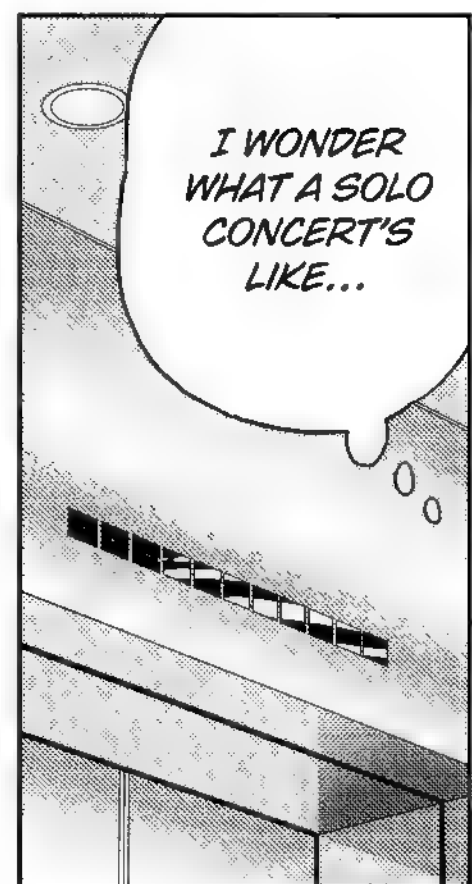
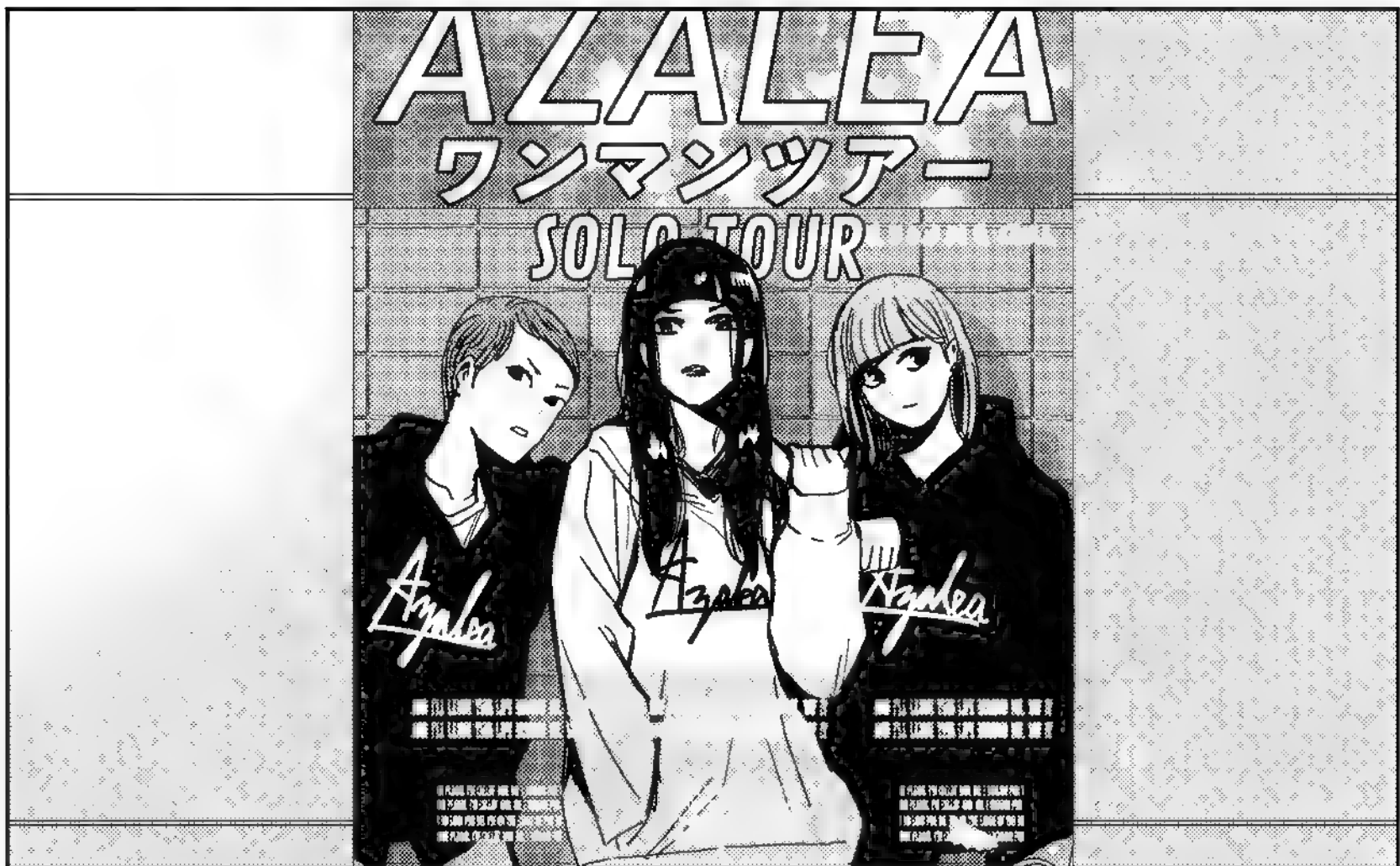
PLEASE DO NOT
DOUBT YOURSELF
BECAUSE YOU ARE
NOT THE CENTER OF
ATTENTION AS OFTEN
AS MARIA OR KEIJI
MAEZONO.

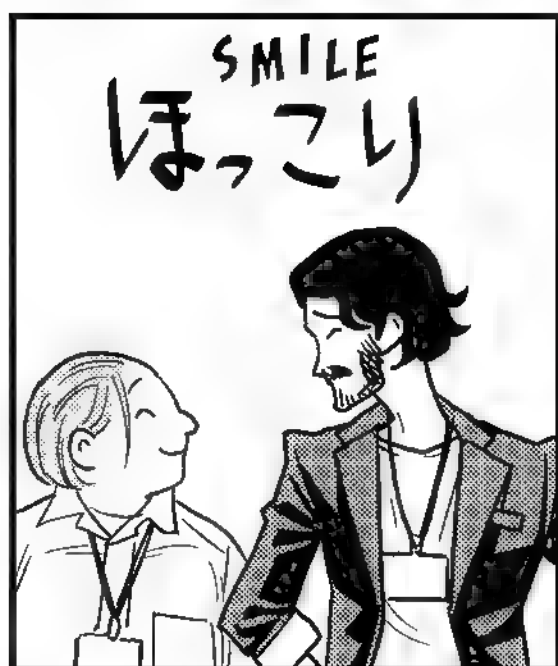
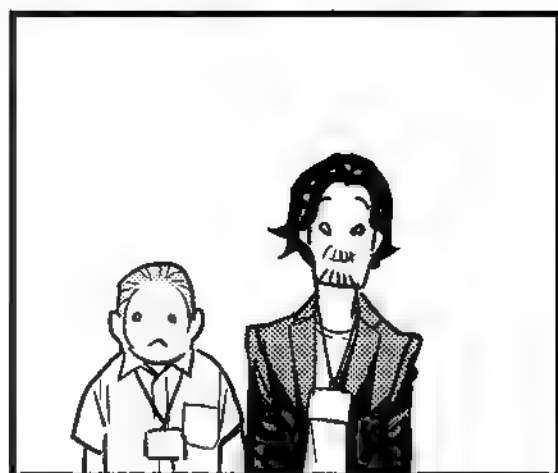


**WELL
THEN, IT'S
ABOUT TIME
WE MOVED ON
TO THE NEXT
STAGE...**





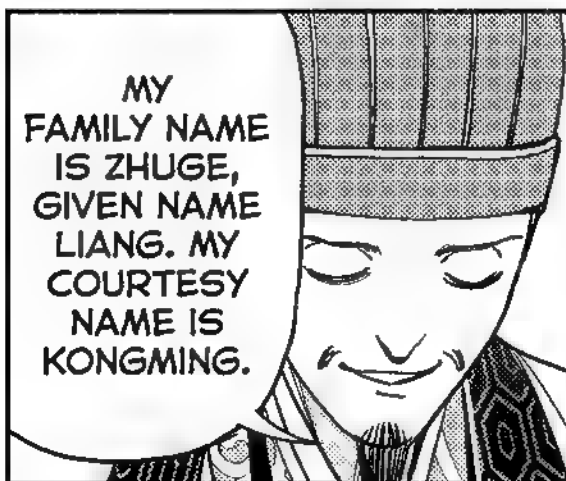






WE'LL
PUT IT ALL
TOGETHER IN
A NEAT LITTLE
ARTICLE.
DON'T WORRY
AND JUST TALK
AS MUCH AS
YOU WANT.

THEN I
BETTER DO
MY BEST
FOR YOU
AS WELL.

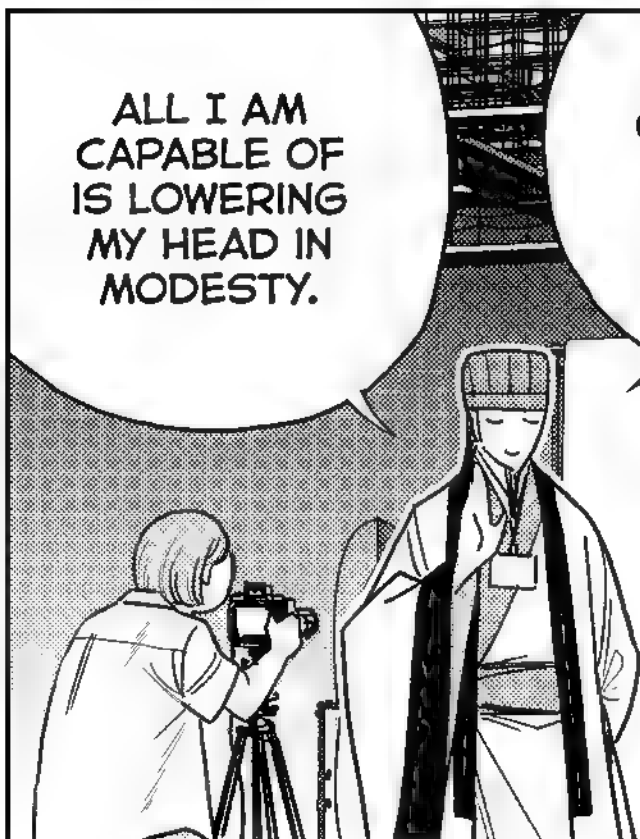


MY
FAMILY NAME
IS ZHUGE,
GIVEN NAME
LIANG. MY
COURTESY
NAME IS
KONGMING.

I AM
HONORED
TO BE
INVITED.



YOU MUST
BE HER
FAMOUS
MANAGER.



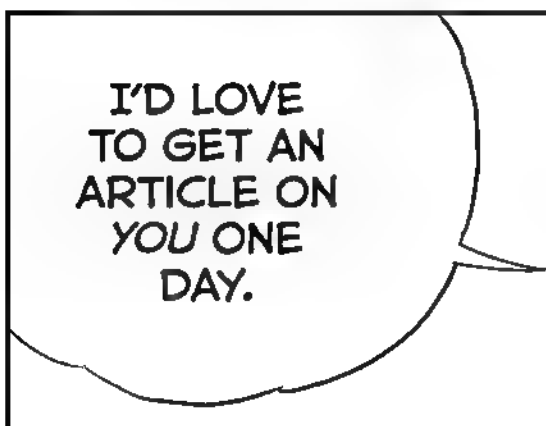
ALL I AM
CAPABLE OF
IS LOWERING
MY HEAD IN
MODESTY.

COMPETE?
WHY, NOT
AT ALL.

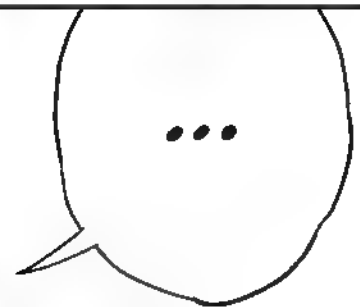


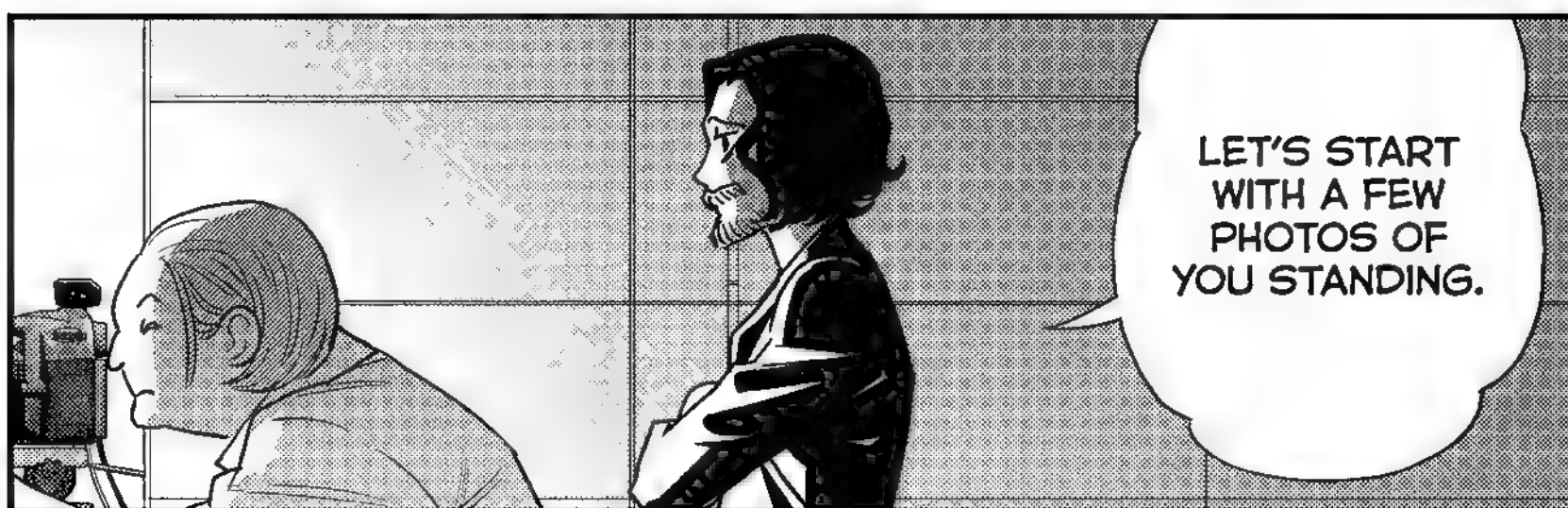
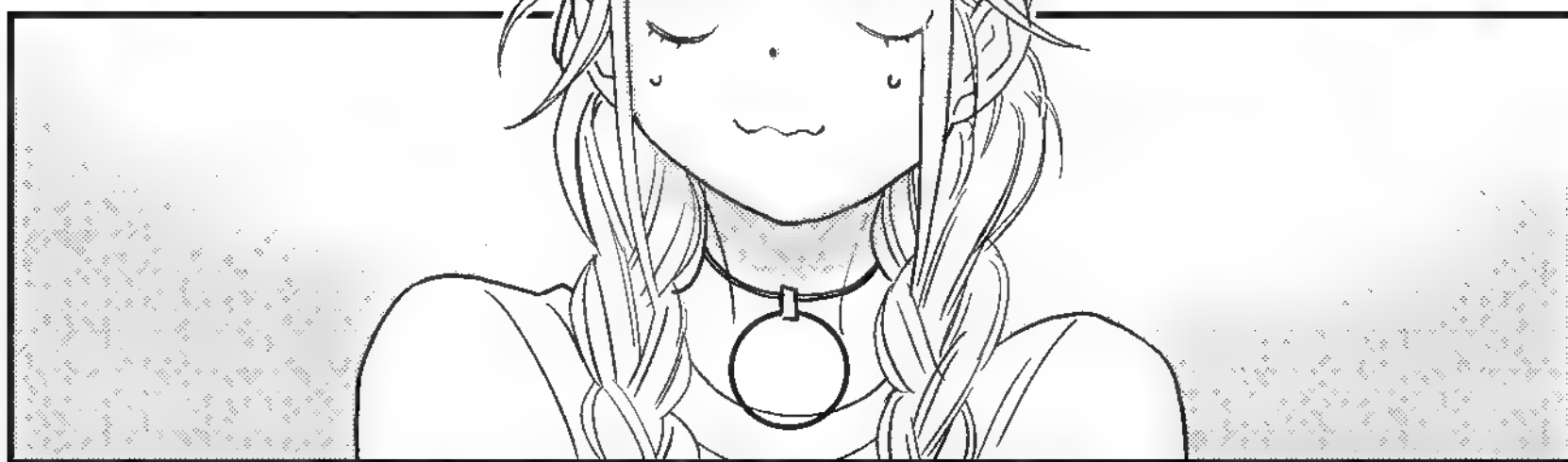
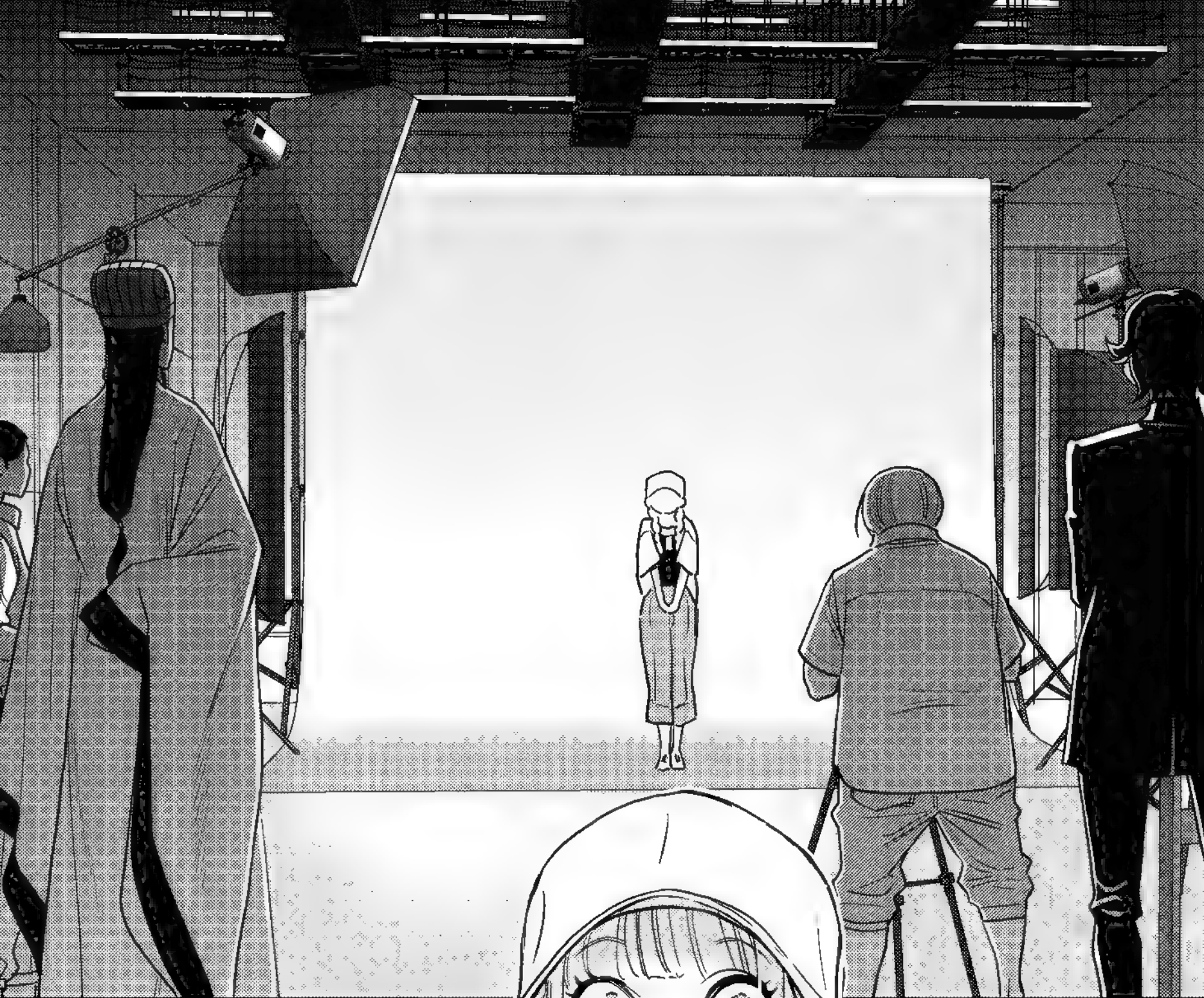
YOU'RE
THE TALK
OF THE
TOWN.

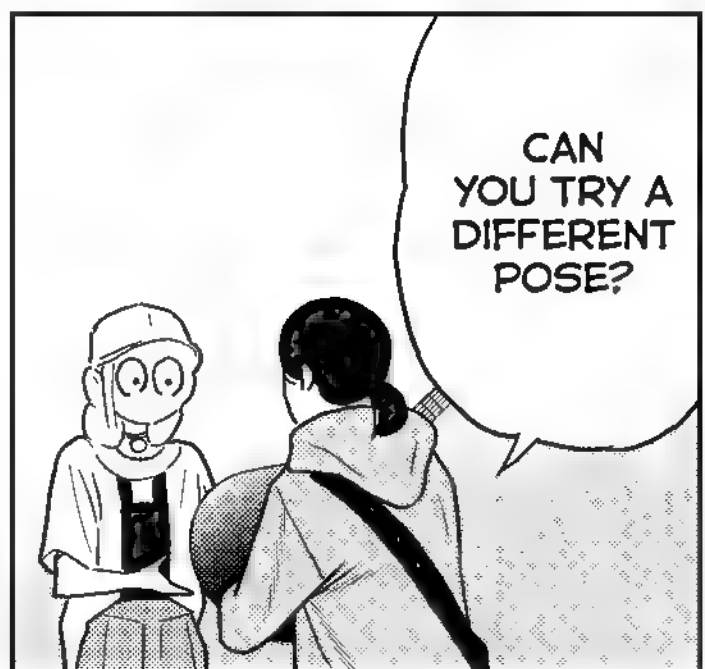
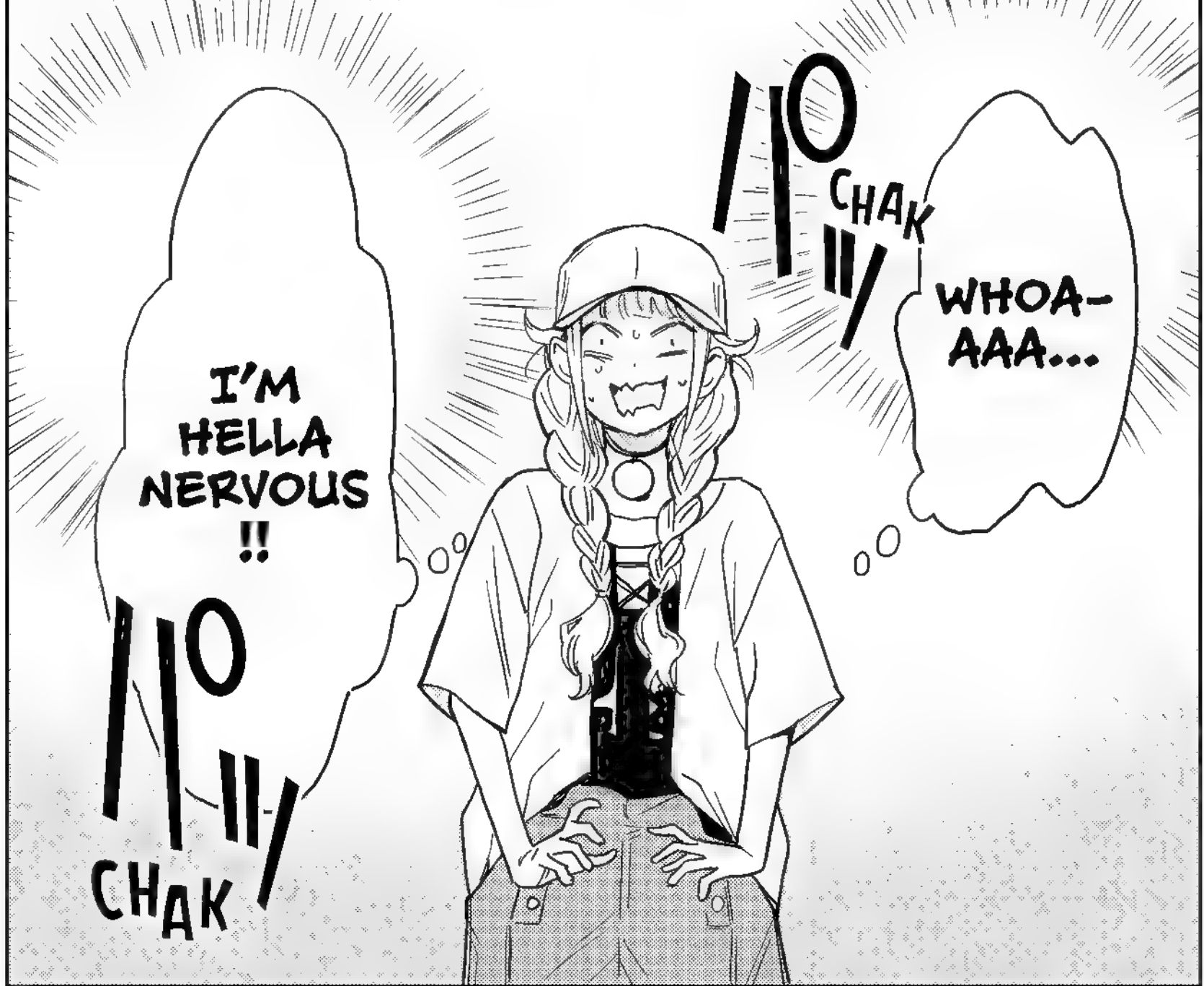
YOU
MANAGED TO
COMPETE WITH
THE BIG THREE
LABELS, HUH?

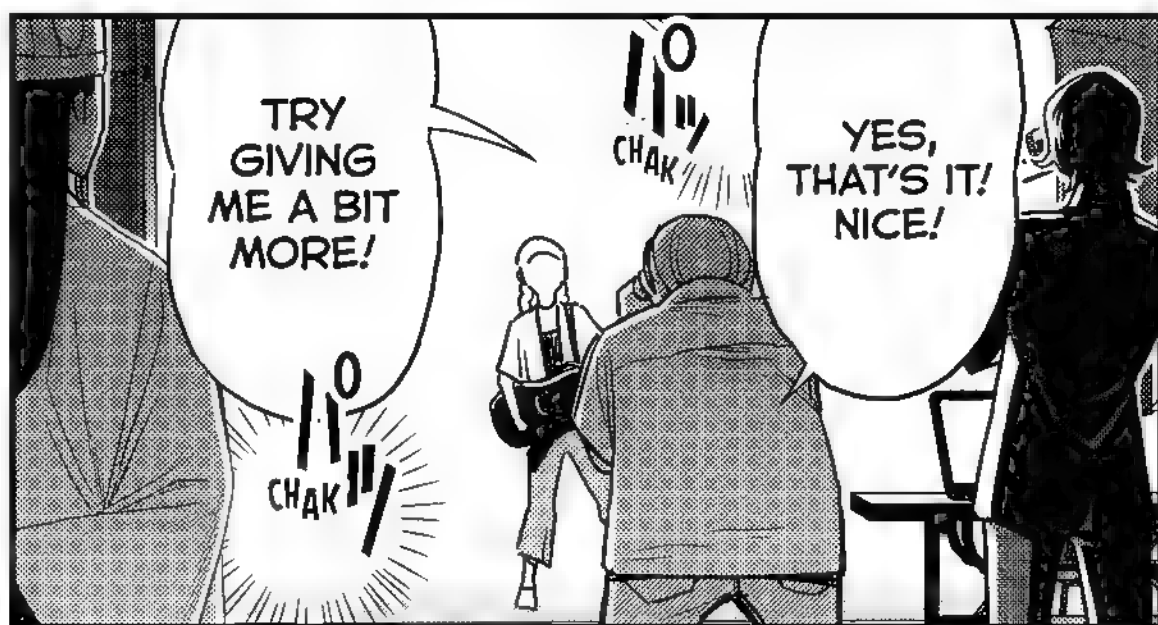


I'D LOVE
TO GET AN
ARTICLE ON
YOU ONE
DAY.







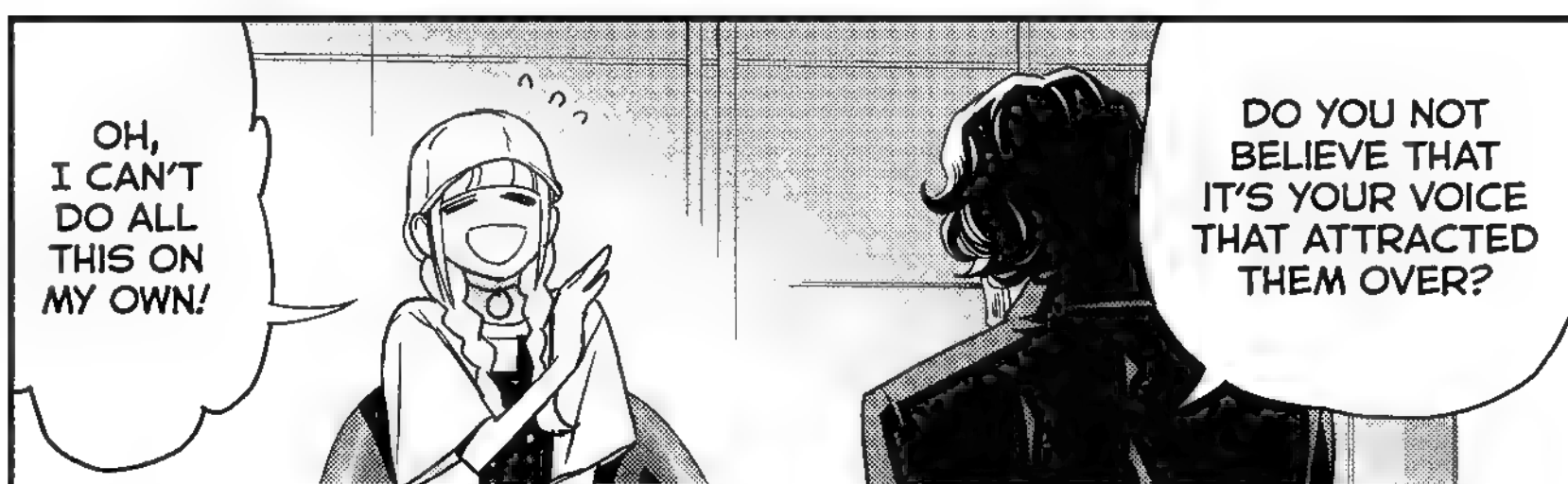






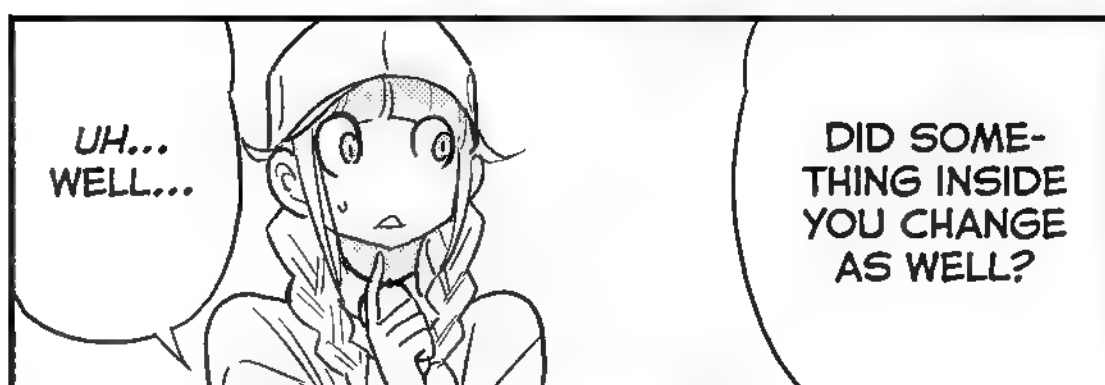
I'M JUST SO
GRATEFUL TO
EVERYONE...

WHO HELPED
BRING THE
AUDIENCE TO
THE THIRD STAGE
AND EVERYONE
WHO CAME.



OH,
I CAN'T
DO ALL
THIS ON
MY OWN!

DO YOU NOT
BELIEVE THAT
IT'S YOUR VOICE
THAT ATTRACTED
THEM OVER?



UH...
WELL...

DID SOME-
THING INSIDE
YOU CHANGE
AS WELL?



ON THE
LATTER HALF
OF YOUR
CONCERT,
IT FELT LIKE
THE WHOLE
ATMOSPHERE
SHIFTED.

I
SEE.

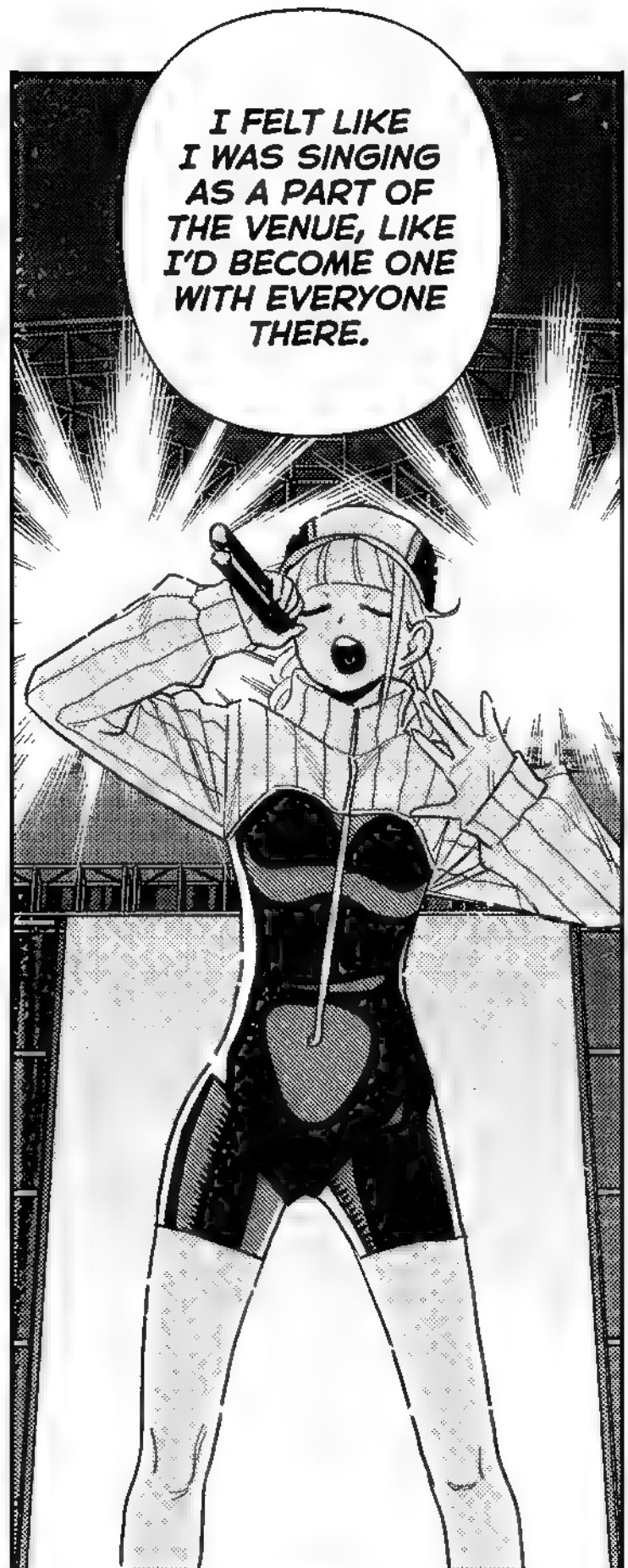


I JUST HAD
THIS STRONG
FEELING THAT I
WASN'T SINGING
ALONE.

I COULD
SUDDENLY
SEE EVERY
ONE OF THE
AUDIENCE'S
FACES.



I WISH...
I COULD
FEEL THAT
SENSE
OF UNITY
AGAIN...



I FELT LIKE
I WAS SINGING
AS A PART OF
THE VENUE, LIKE
I'D BECOME ONE
WITH EVERYONE
THERE.



I WAS
DES-
PERATE,
TOO...
UHH...

THAT'S
A FEELING
WE NORMAL
PEOPLE
WOULDN'T
EVER
EXPERIENCE.

I'M JUST
HAPPY MY
FEELINGS
REACHED
EVERYONE
THERE.

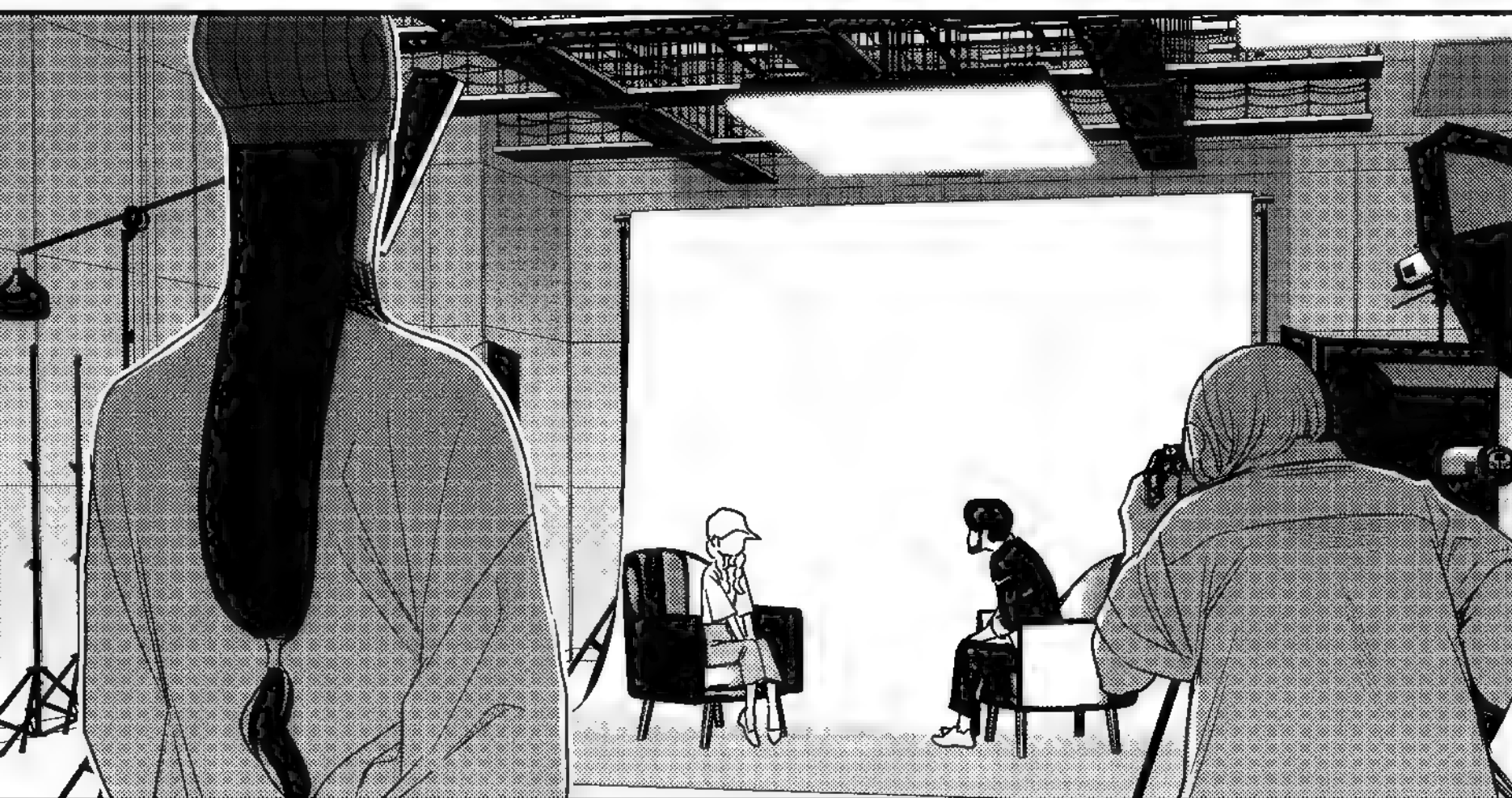


HUH? UH...
WHY DON'T
YOU TRY
SINGING?

DO YOU
HAVE ANY TIPS
FOR ME TO
HELP UNIFY MY
FAMILY LIFE?

JUST
YESTERDAY,
SHE WAS YELLING
AT ME. "HEY, I
DON'T WANT TO
EAT CHINESE
FOOD!"

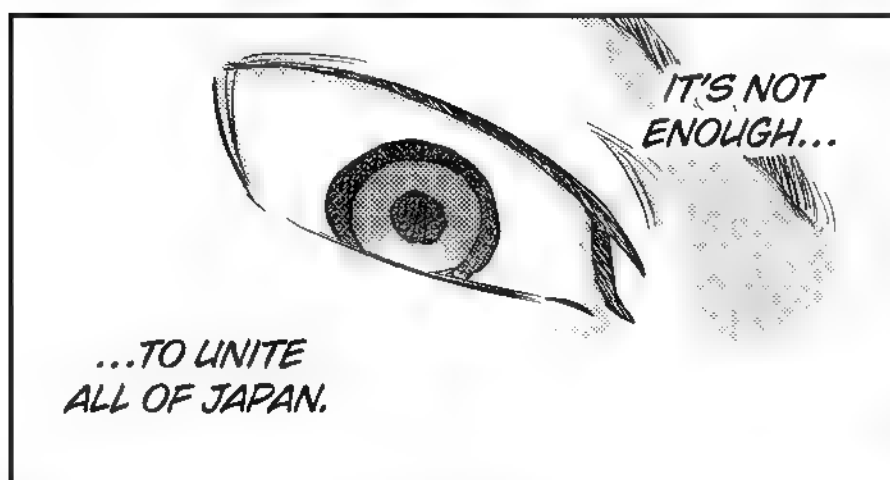
FORGET A
WHOLE VENUE—
I FIND IT HARD
ENOUGH TRYING
TO FEEL UNIFIED
WITH MY WIFE.





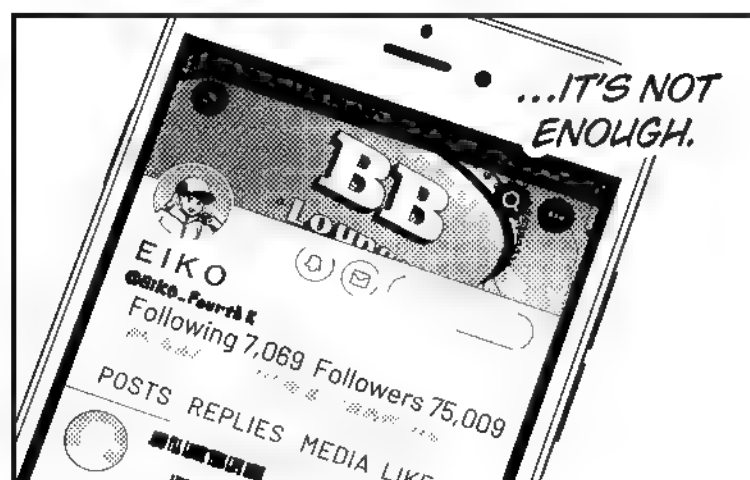
DUE TO THE TRENDING
DIKDOK VIDEO, HER
SOCIAL MEDIA HAS
GAINED AN ADDITIONAL
30,000 FOLLOWERS.

HOWEVER...



IT'S NOT
ENOUGH...

...TO UNITE
ALL OF JAPAN.

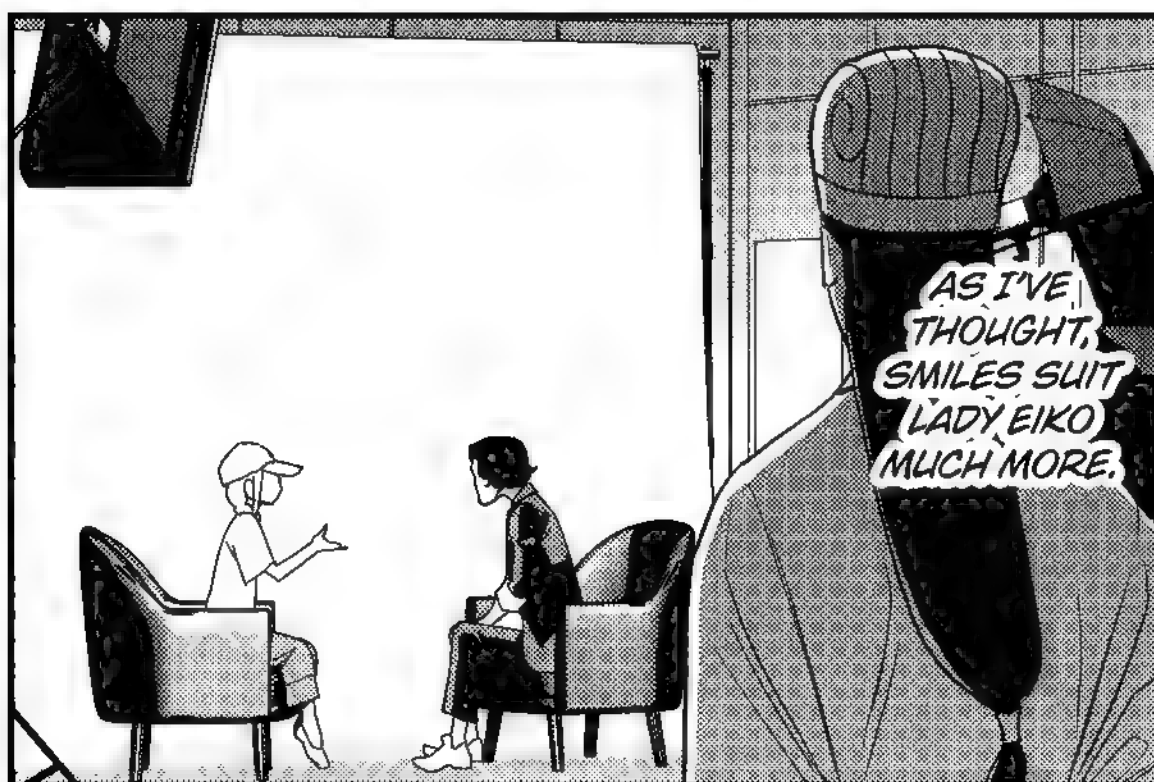


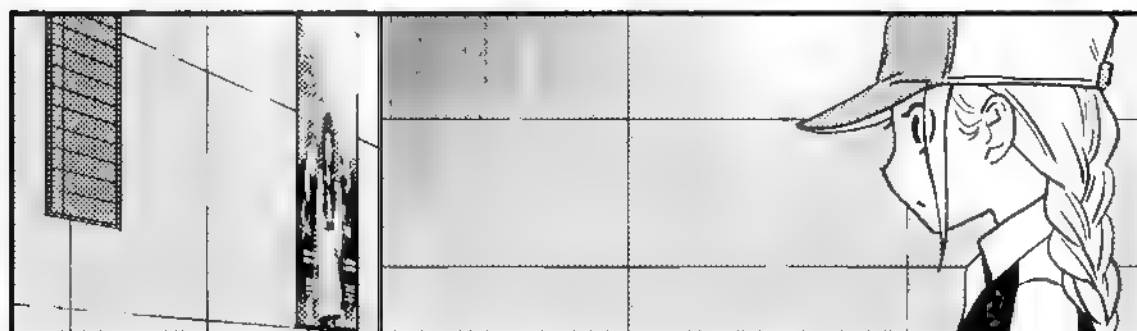
...IT'S NOT
ENOUGH.

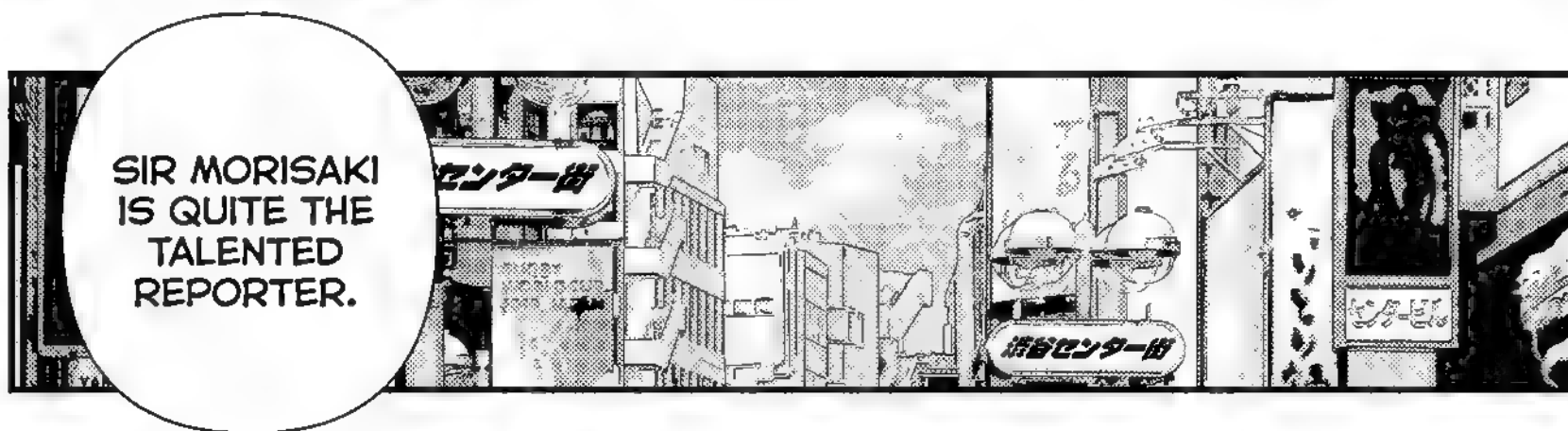


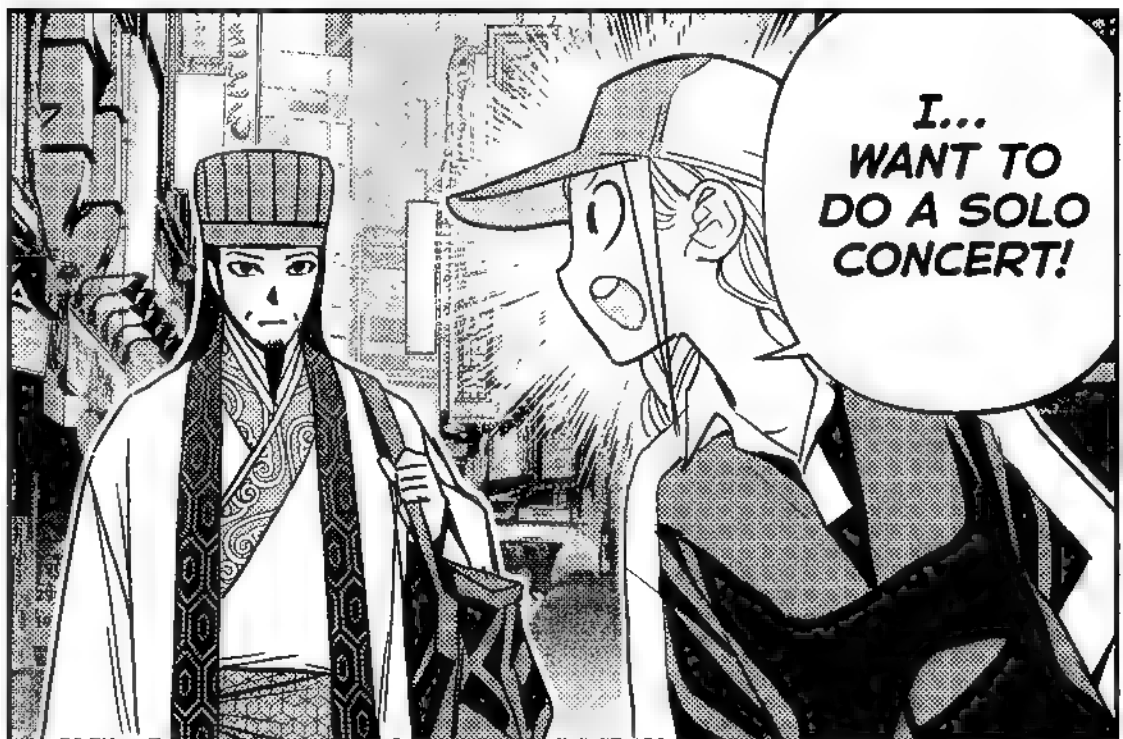
FEI
PAT













IN FOUR MONTHS, YOU CAN HOST A SOLO CONCERT AT ZECT TOKYO. HOW ABOUT IT, MY LADY?



3000 PEOPLE?! BUYING TICKETS? JUST FOR ME?!

AND THEY CAN SEAT 3000 PEOPLE...



BUT THEIR SCHEDULE'S PACKED FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS, ISN'T IT?

HUH? ZECT TOKYO...?



...ALREADY HAVE A PLAN IN MIND TO SECURE YOU THE VENUE.

HEH HEH HEH... I, KONGMING...



HEY
GUYS!

霸道

Aim for the Top
The Road to Lady Eiko's
Solo Concert

英子さん
単独ライブへの道

霸道
英子さん
単独ライブへの道

Aim for the
The Road to Lady
Solo Concert

THANKS
SO MUCH FOR
SPARING THE
TIME TO COME
TODAY!

R.I.P
yudhiro takahashi
tooru okada
rei matsumoto
sakoto

NOW
LET'S START
THE FOURTH
KINGDOM'S
STRATEGY
MEETING!

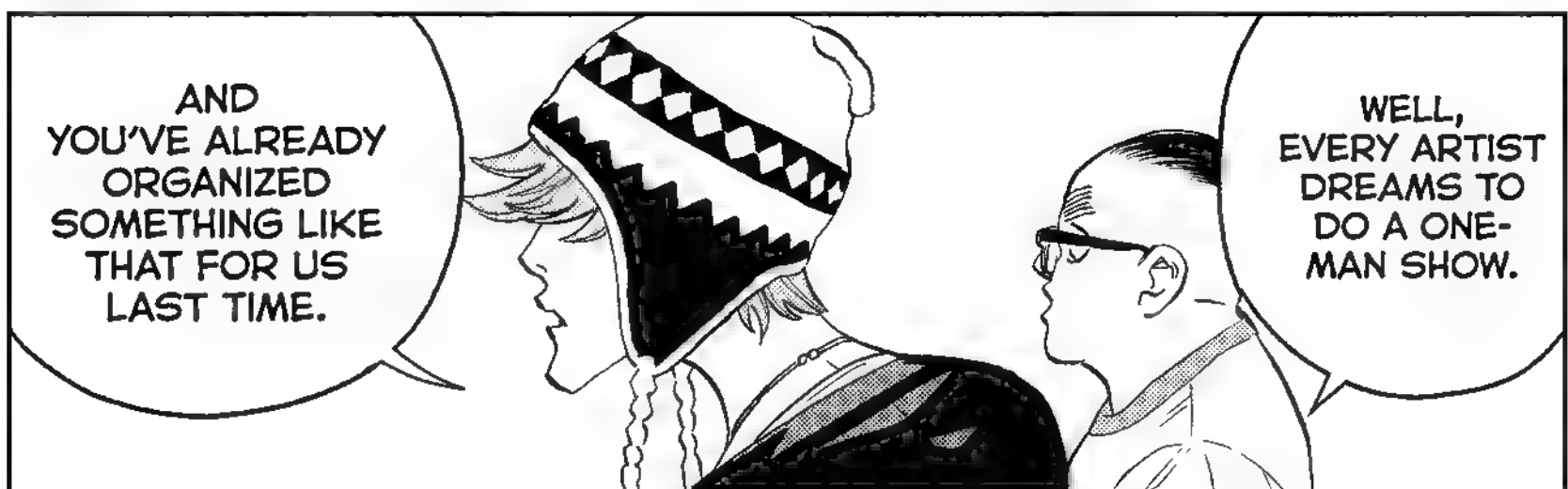
CHAPTER 112 Solo Concert Strategy Meeting

HUMAN



DOES EVERYONE
UNDERSTAND WHAT
IT MEANS FOR US
TO HOST A SOLO
CONCERT?

ALLOW ME
TO CONFIRM
SOMETHING
OF UTMOST
IMPORTANCE.



AND
YOU'VE ALREADY
ORGANIZED
SOMETHING LIKE
THAT FOR US
LAST TIME.

WELL,
EVERY ARTIST
DREAMS TO
DO A ONE-
MAN SHOW.



HOWEVER,
NONE OF US HAVE
ANY EXPERIENCE
HOSTING A SOLO
CONCERT FOR A
SINGLE SINGER.

WE ARE
NOTHING MORE
THAN FRESH
RECRUITS
DEPLOYED
TO FIGHT
THIS WAR.

LADY EIKO'S
FINAL GOAL IS
TO STAND ON
THE MAIN STAGE
AT VOICELL
LAND.

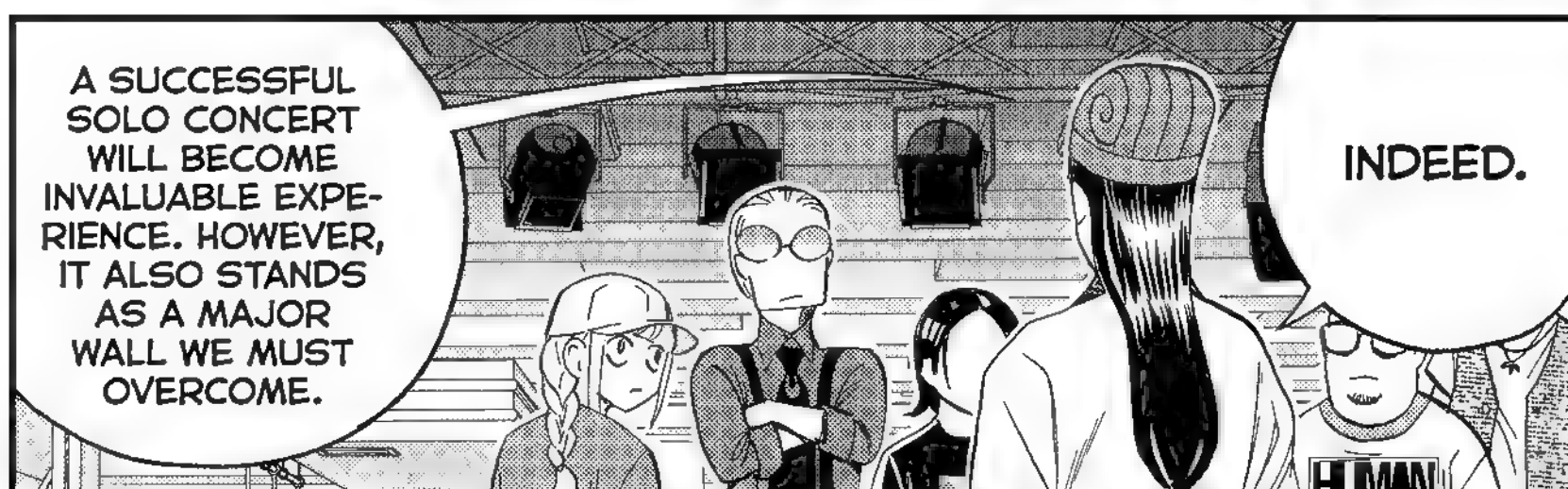


YOU
NEED A SOLO
PERFORMANCE
THAT'LL MAKE
YOU SHINE
ALONE.

IF YOU'RE
GOIN' TO VOICELL
LAND, THEN YOU
NEED YOUR OWN
FLAIR AS AN
ARTIST.

I SEE.

AND DOING A
SOLO CONCERT
IS YOUR WAY
OF TRAININ' THE
SOLDIERS.

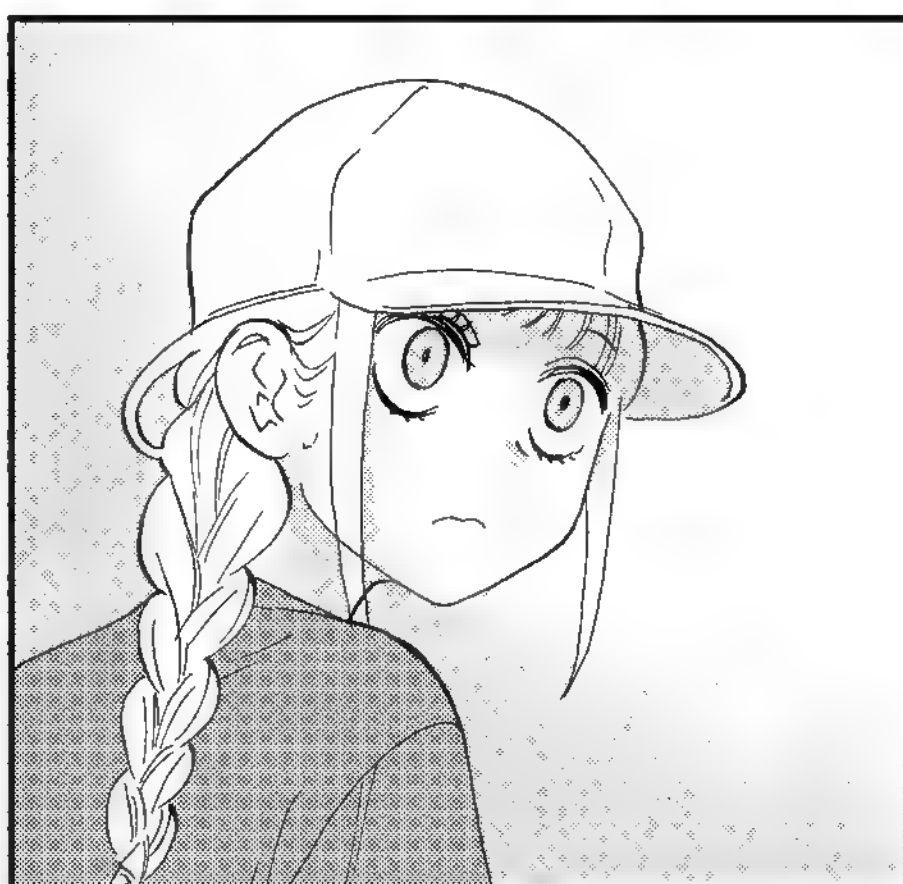


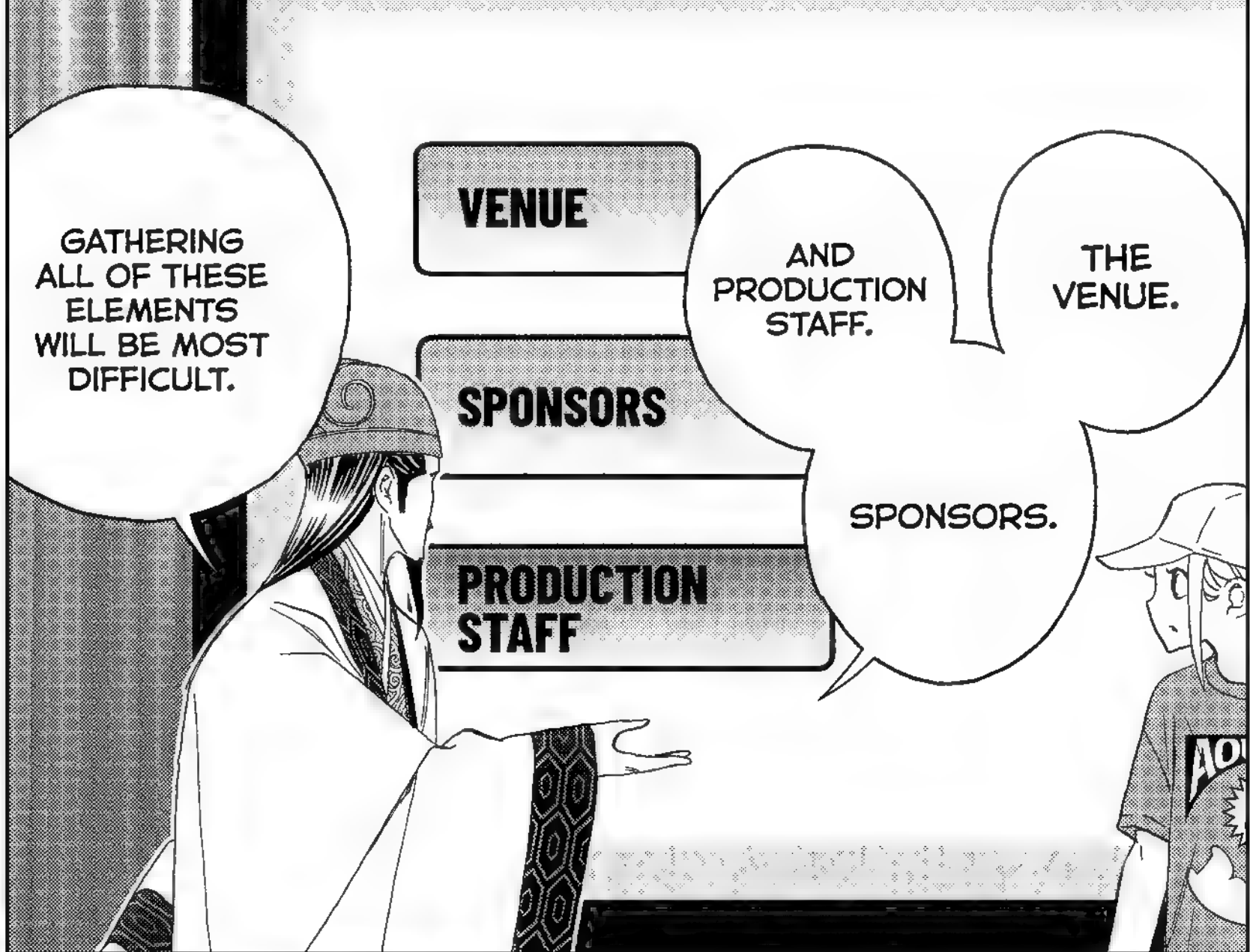
A SUCCESSFUL
SOLO CONCERT
WILL BECOME
INVALUABLE EXPE-
RIENCE. HOWEVER,
IT ALSO STANDS
AS A MAJOR
WALL WE MUST
OVERCOME.

INDEED.



THERE
ARE THREE
MAIN THINGS
WE NEED
FOR A SOLO
CONCERT.







IT'S UNREALISTIC TO HOPE THAT WE CAN GET ON THE WAITLIST AND GRAB A CANCELED SLOT FOUR MONTHS FROM NOW...

THEY'RE NOT GONNA LET JUST ANYONE PLAY THERE. YOU NEED A GOOD LEVEL OF POPULARITY TO GET IN.

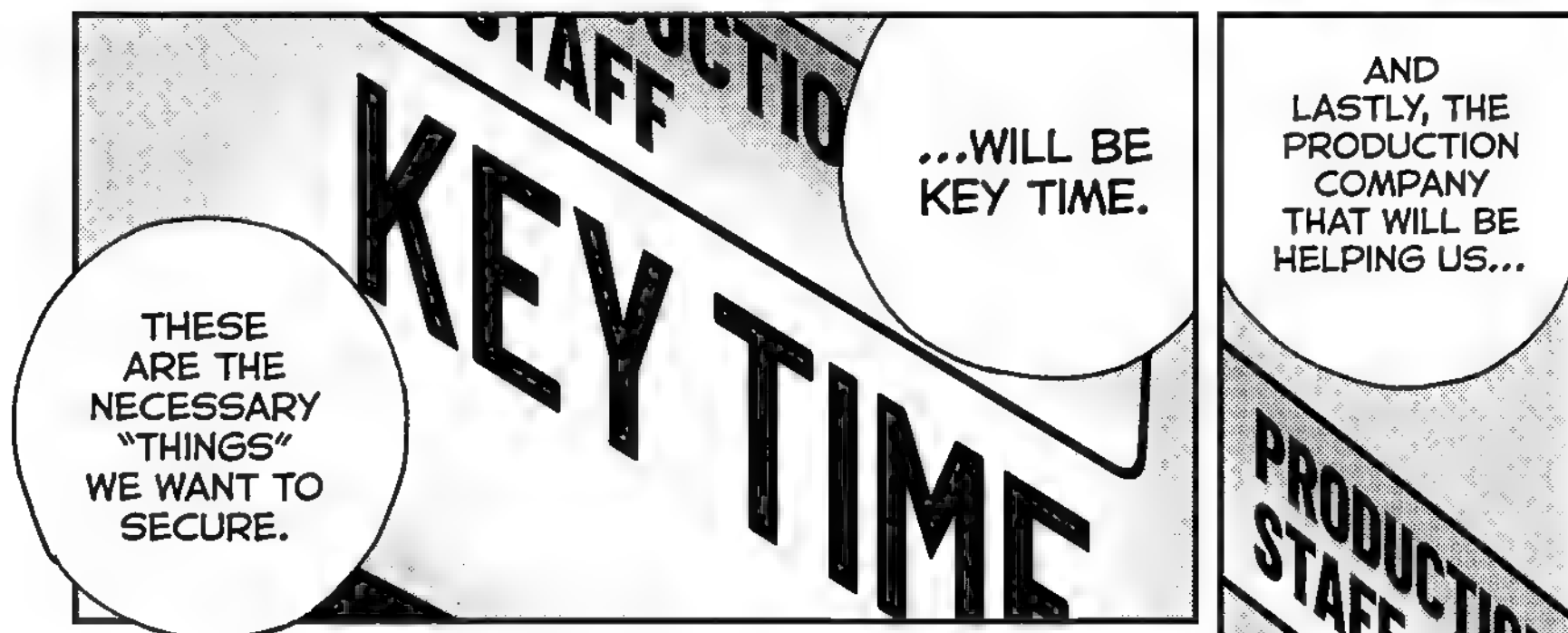
ZECT TOKYO? THAT AIN'T GONNA BE EASY.



...AND THE BIGGEST STREAMING COMPANY IN THE COUNTRY, WITH A YEARLY REVENUE OF 35 BILLION YEN, ARUTE TV.

FOR SPONSORS, WE WANT BLUE BULL, A COMPANY WITH A YEARLY REVENUE OF ONE TRILLION YEN...*

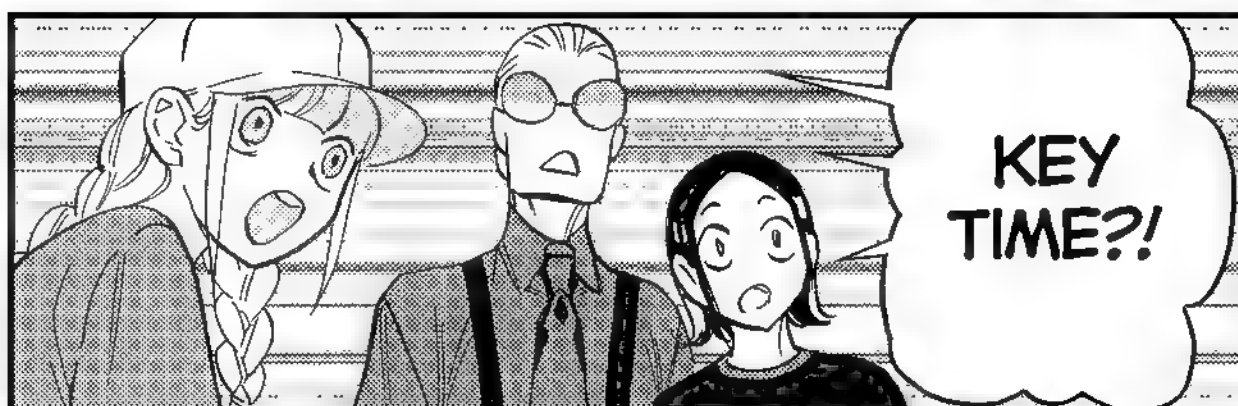
*100 YEN IS ROUGHLY EQUAL TO \$1 USD.



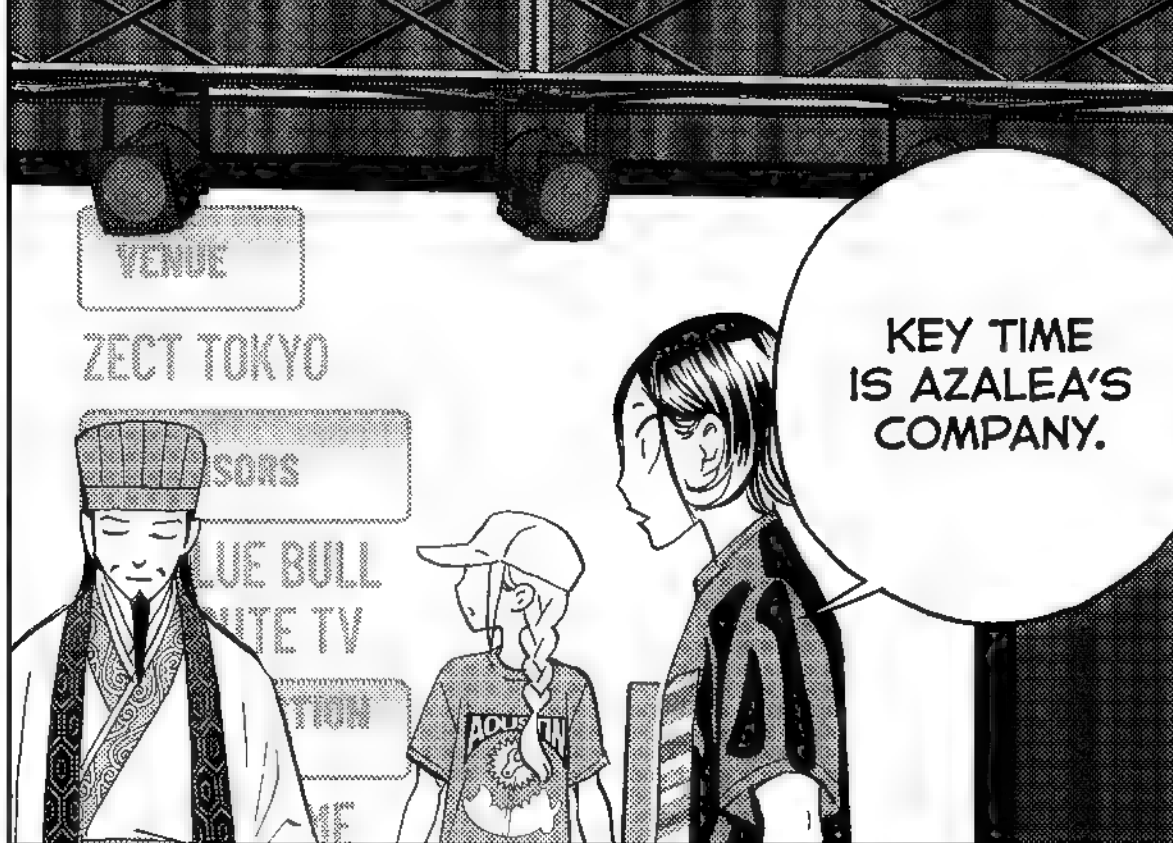
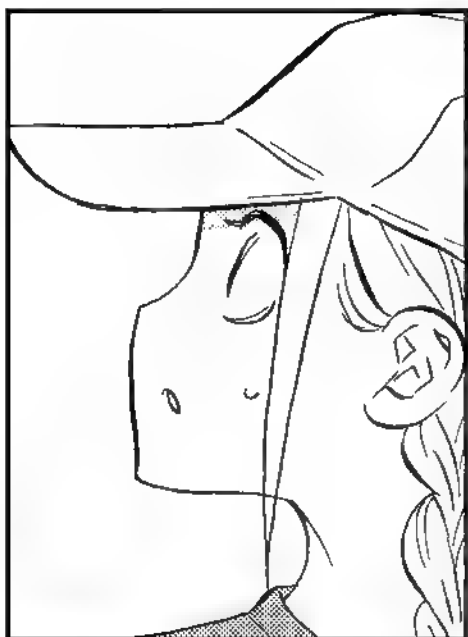
THESE ARE THE NECESSARY "THINGS" WE WANT TO SECURE.

...WILL BE KEY TIME.

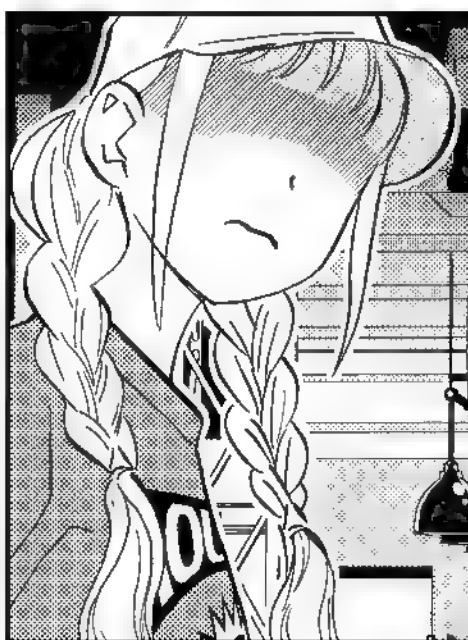
AND LASTLY, THE PRODUCTION COMPANY THAT WILL BE HELPING US...



KEY TIME?!



KEY TIME
IS AZALEA'S
COMPANY.



EVEN
EIKO'S
SHAKIN'
OVER
HERE!



OKAY, THIS
IS GETTIN'
OUTTA HAND.
YOU'RE
AIMING WAY
TOO HIGH!

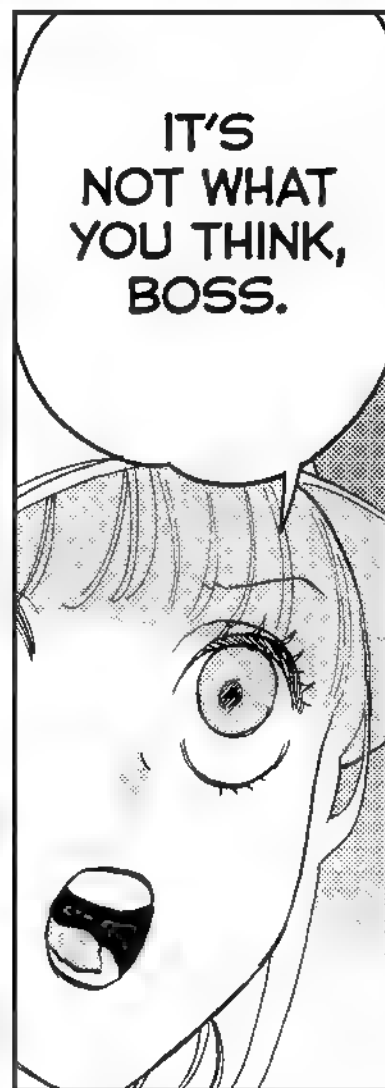
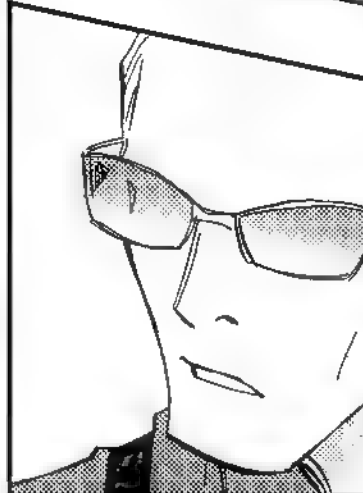


I'M SERIOUS...
I REALLY WANT
TO PUT ON A
SOLO CONCERT.

GUYS.



I'M
SHAKING...
FROM EX-
CITEMENT.

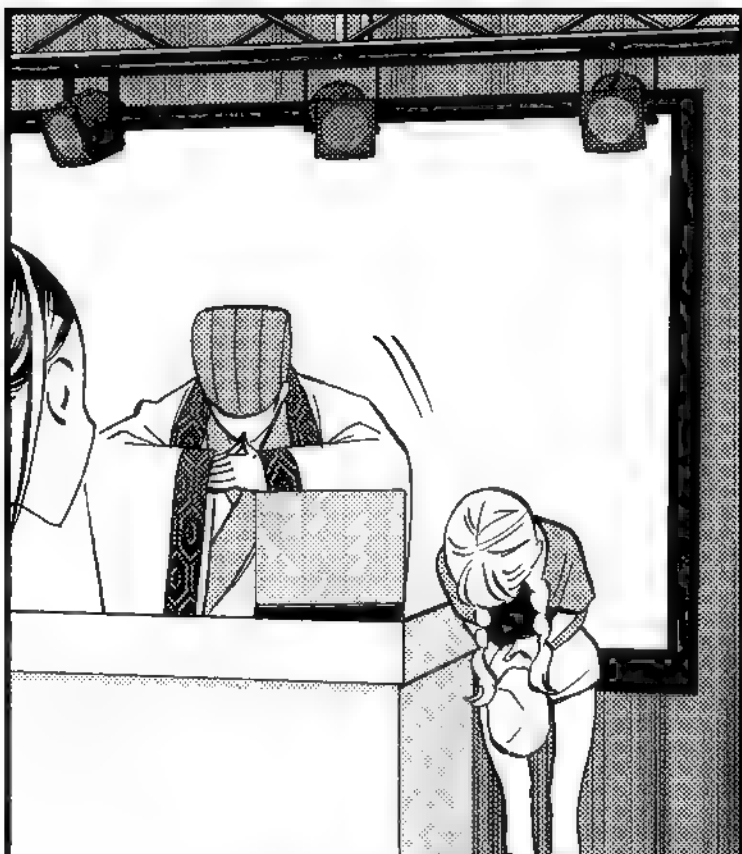


IT'S
NOT WHAT
YOU THINK,
BOSS.

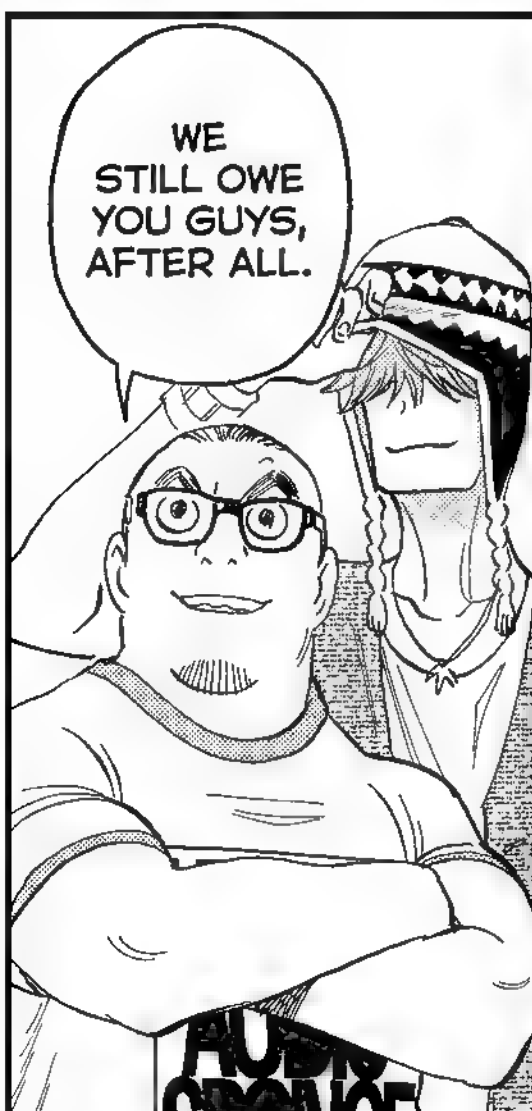


I'M BEGGING
ALL OF YOU!

SO
PLEASE,
HELP US
OUT WITH
KONG-
MING'S
PLAN!



MY IDOL
JUST NEEDS
TO SAY THE
WORD AND
I'LL PULL ALL
THE OVERTIME
YOU NEED!

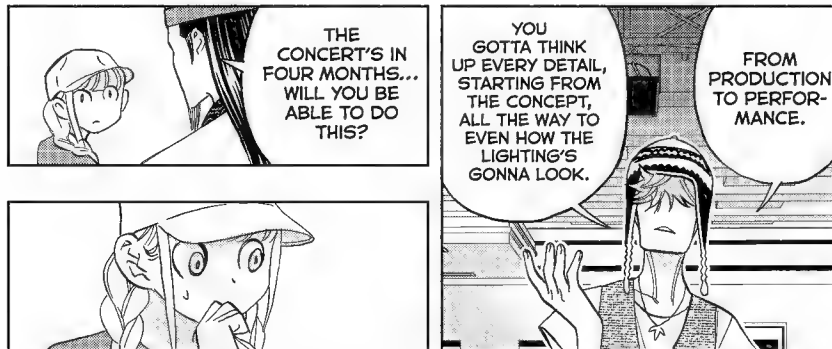


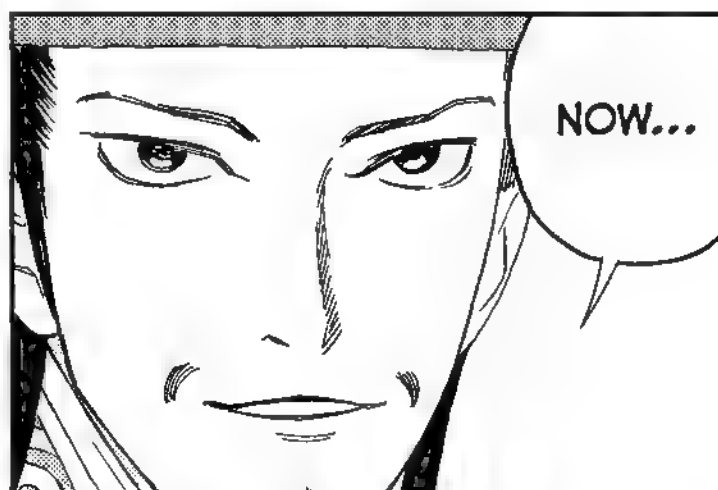
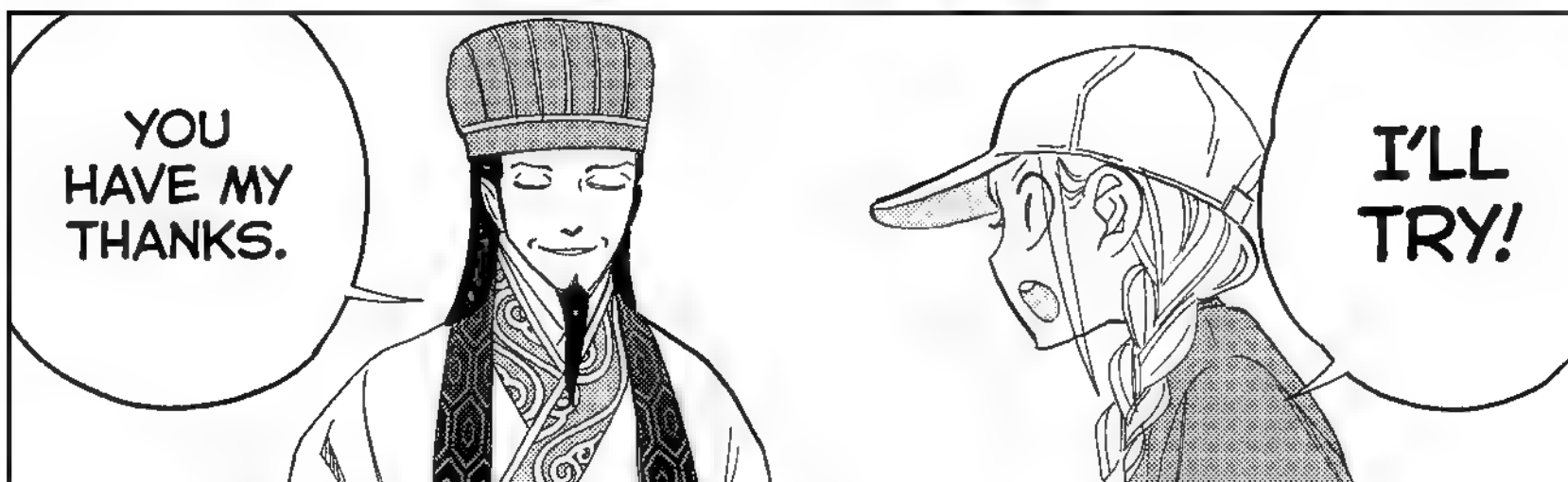
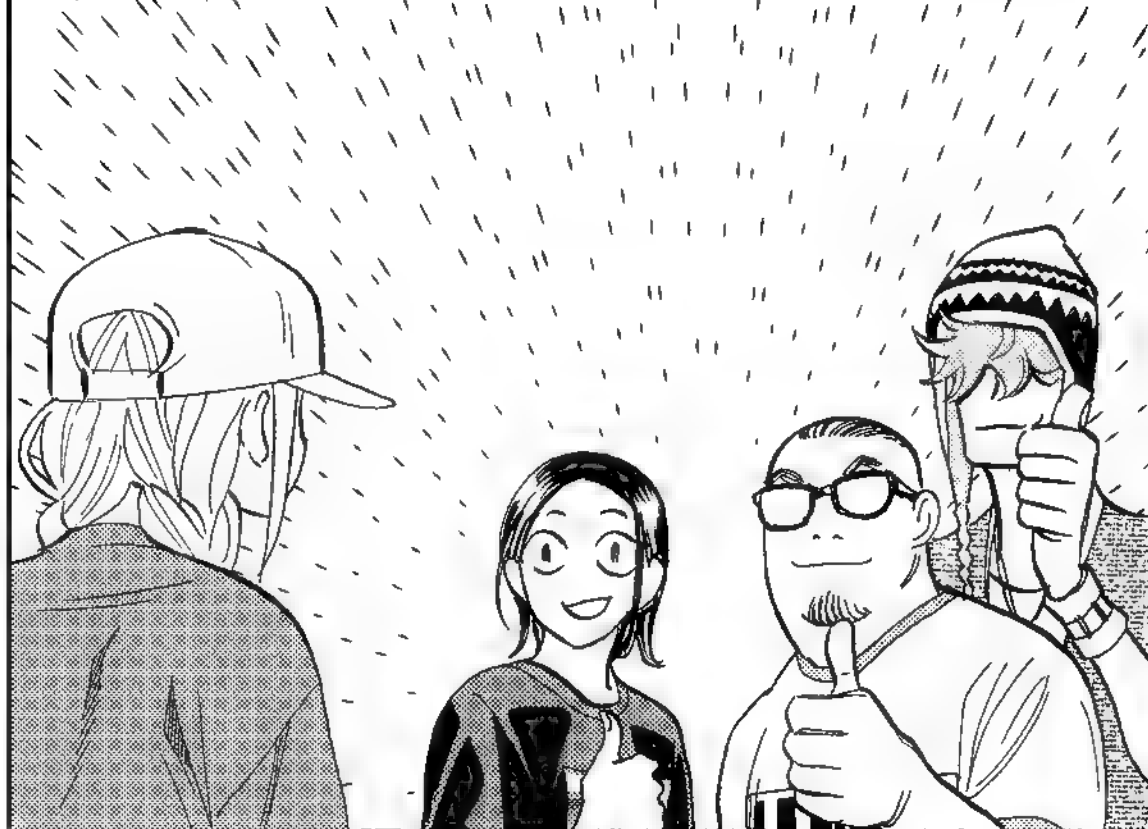
WE
STILL OWE
YOU GUYS,
AFTER ALL.

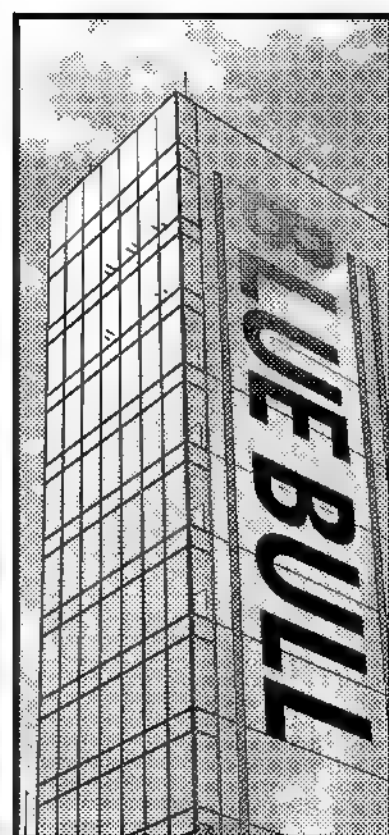


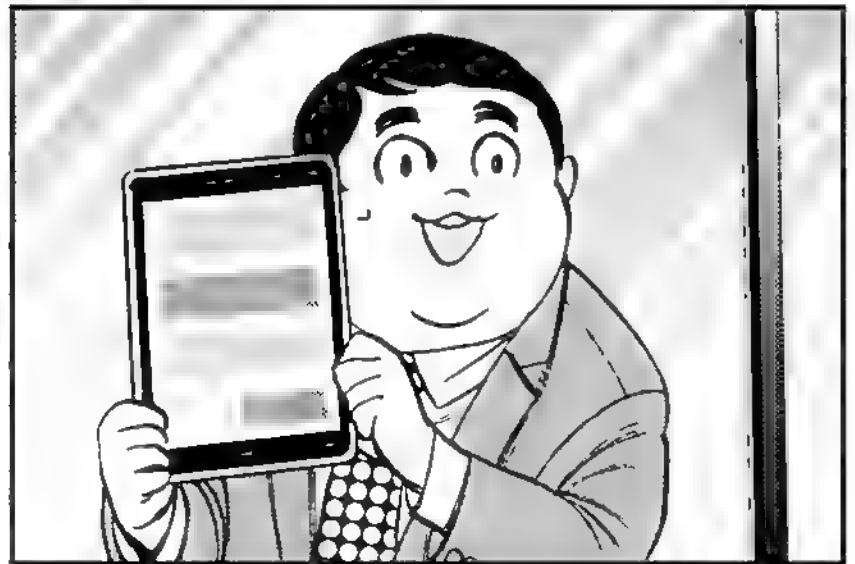
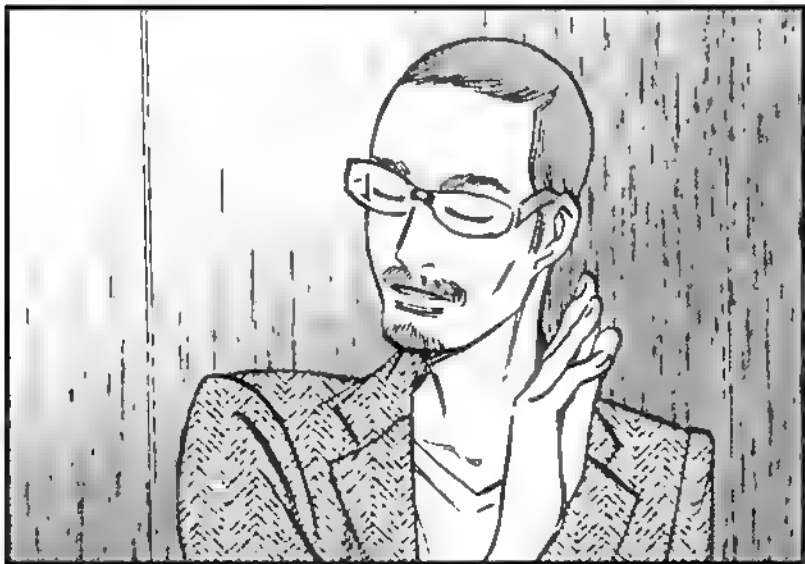
JUST LIKE
SUMMER
SONIA, I'LL
BE HERE TO
OPEN THE
WAY FOR
YA!

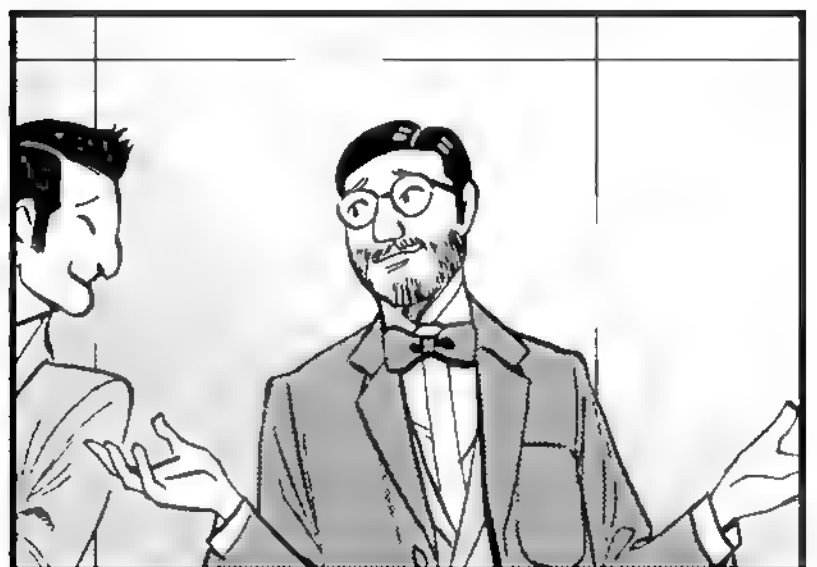
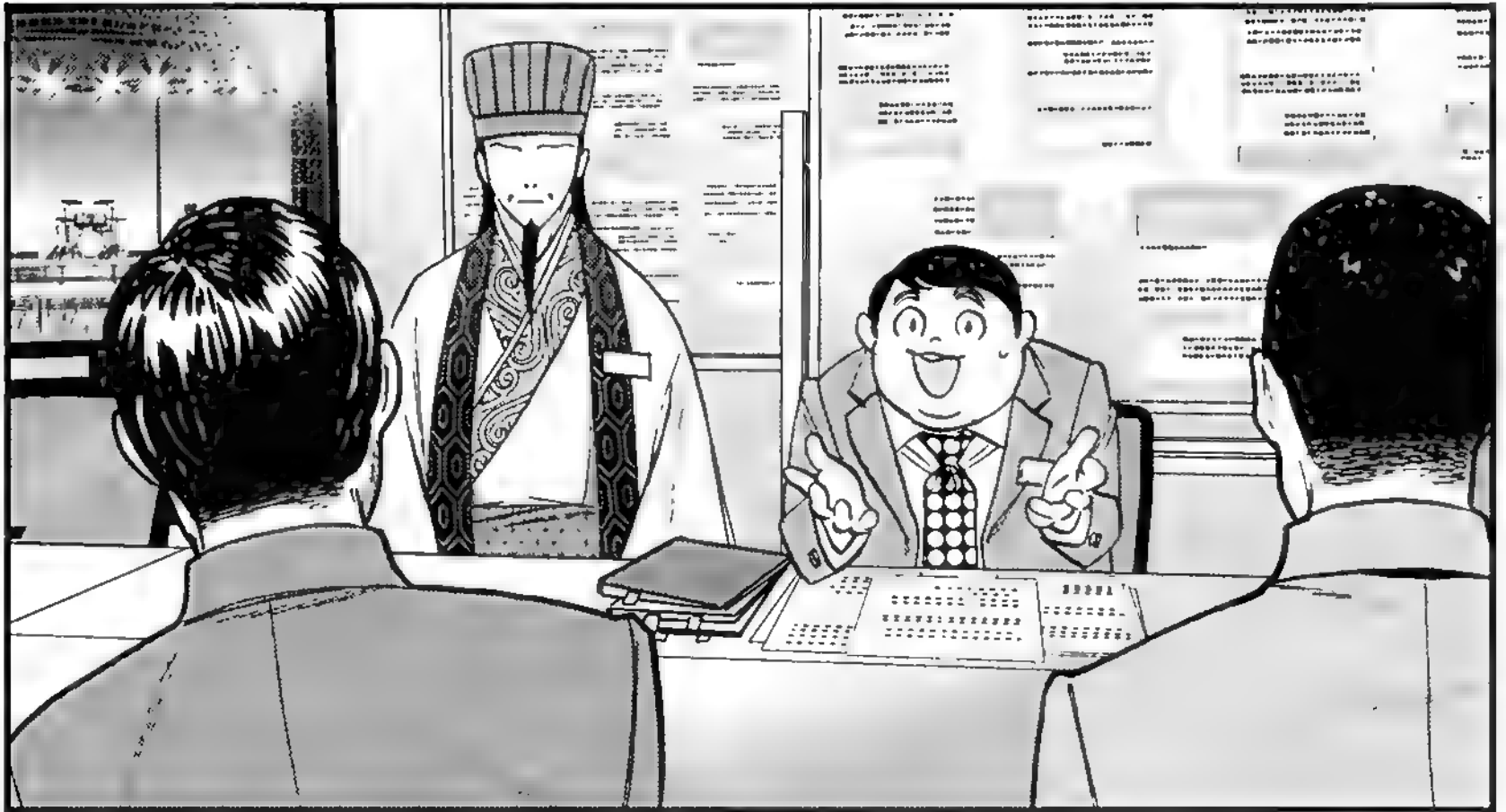
YOU
GOT
IT.

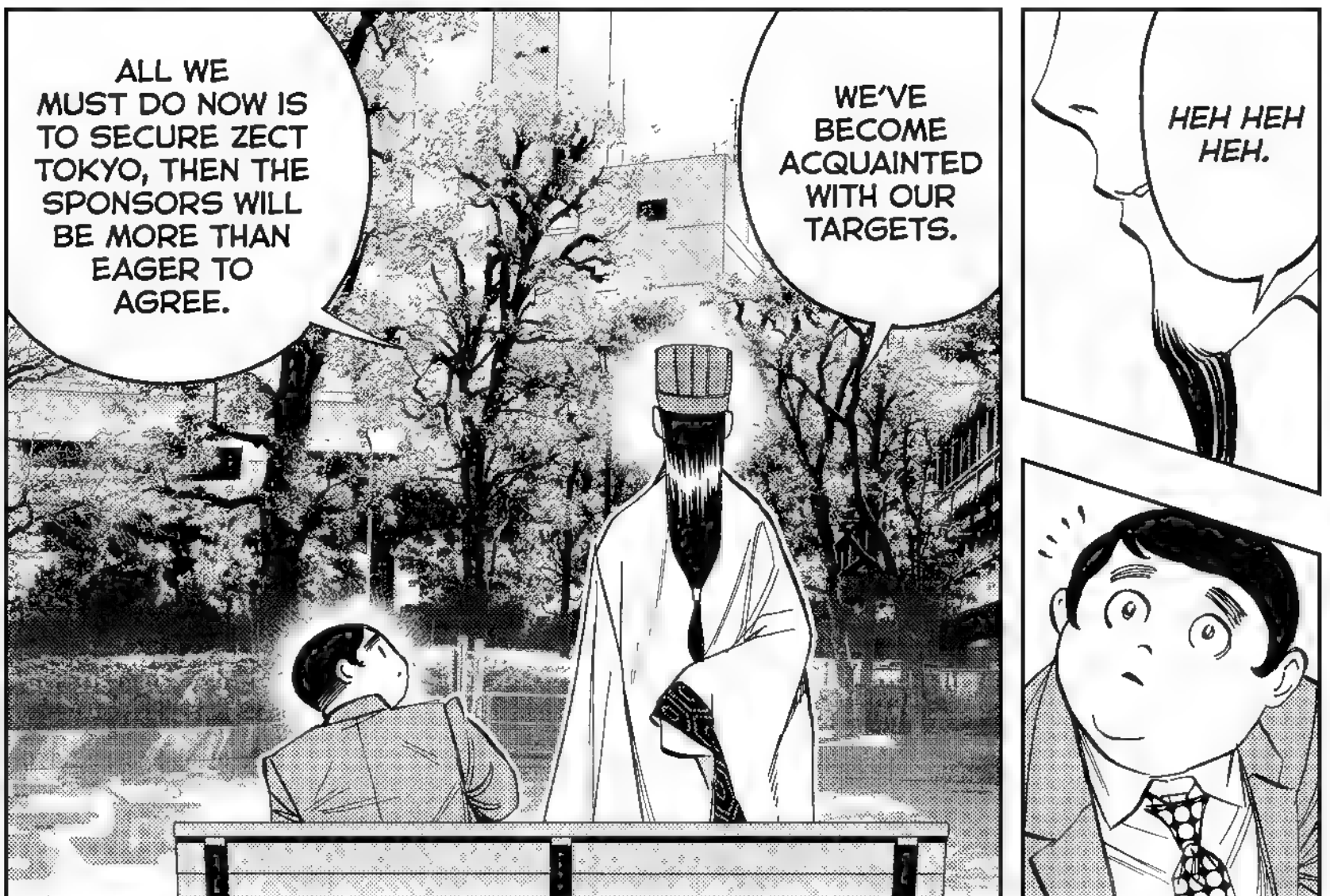


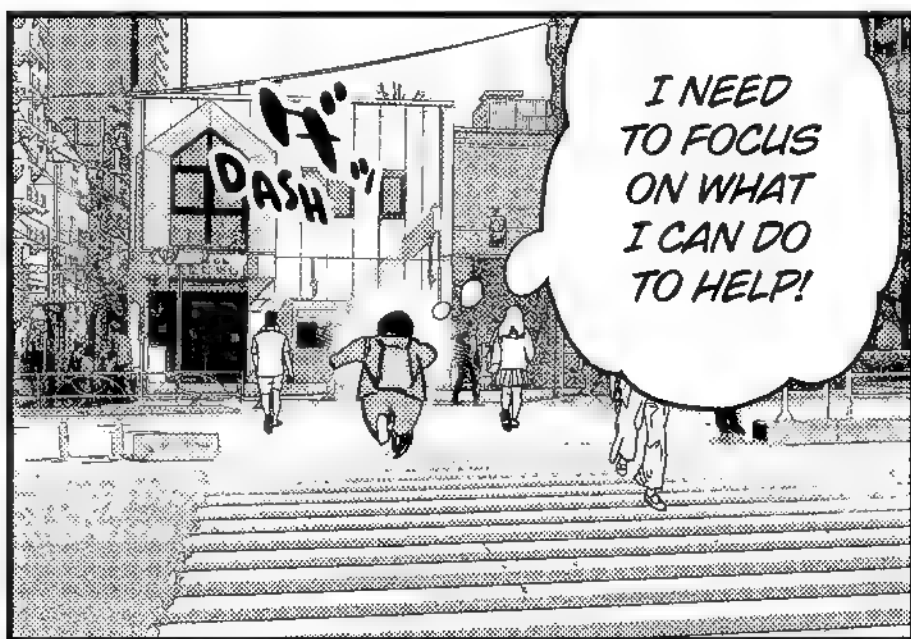


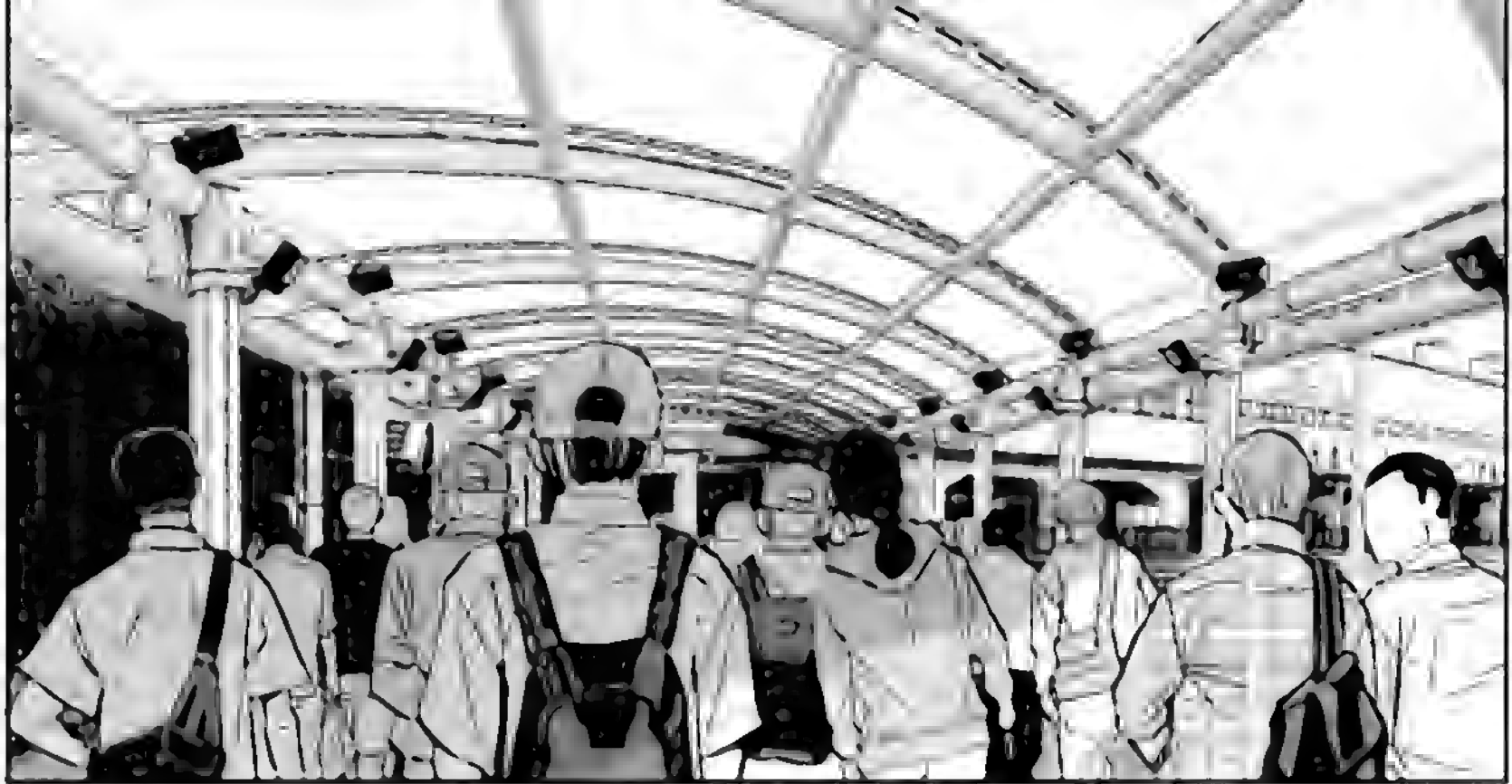


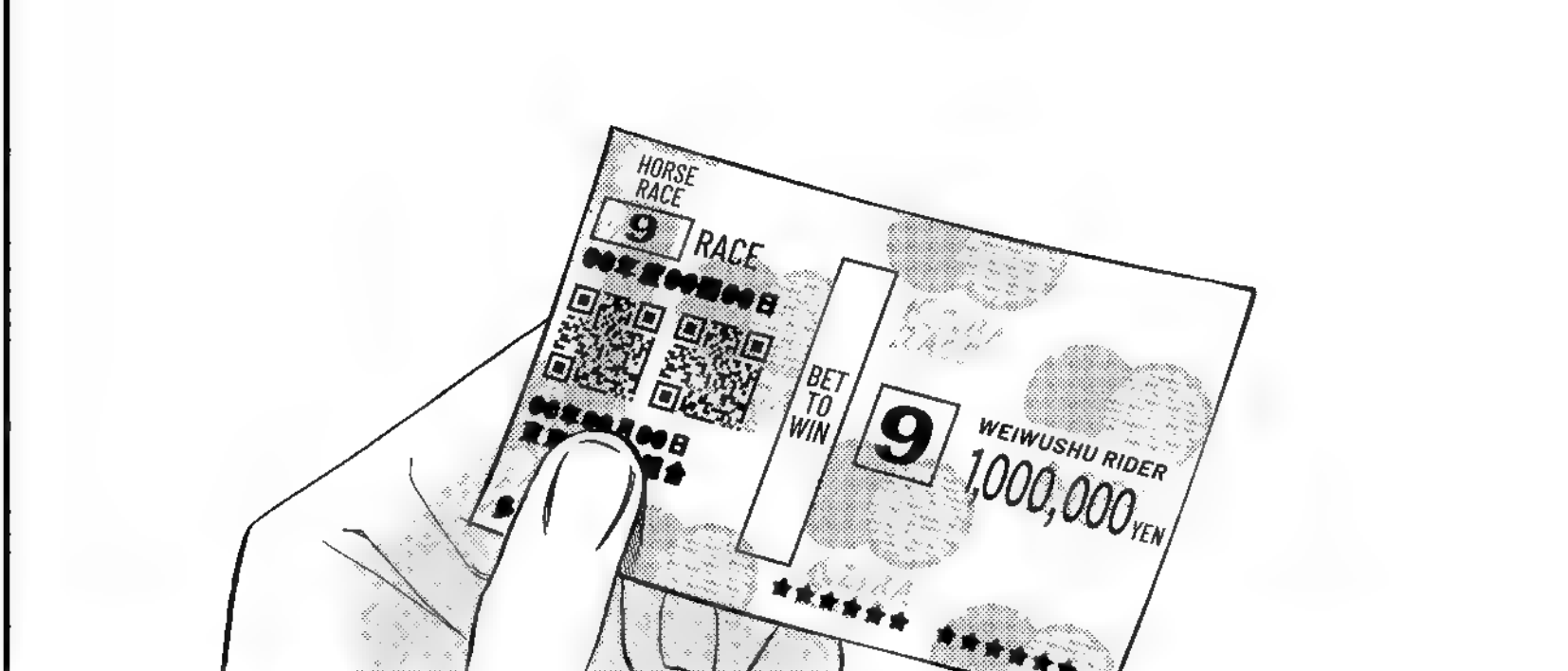




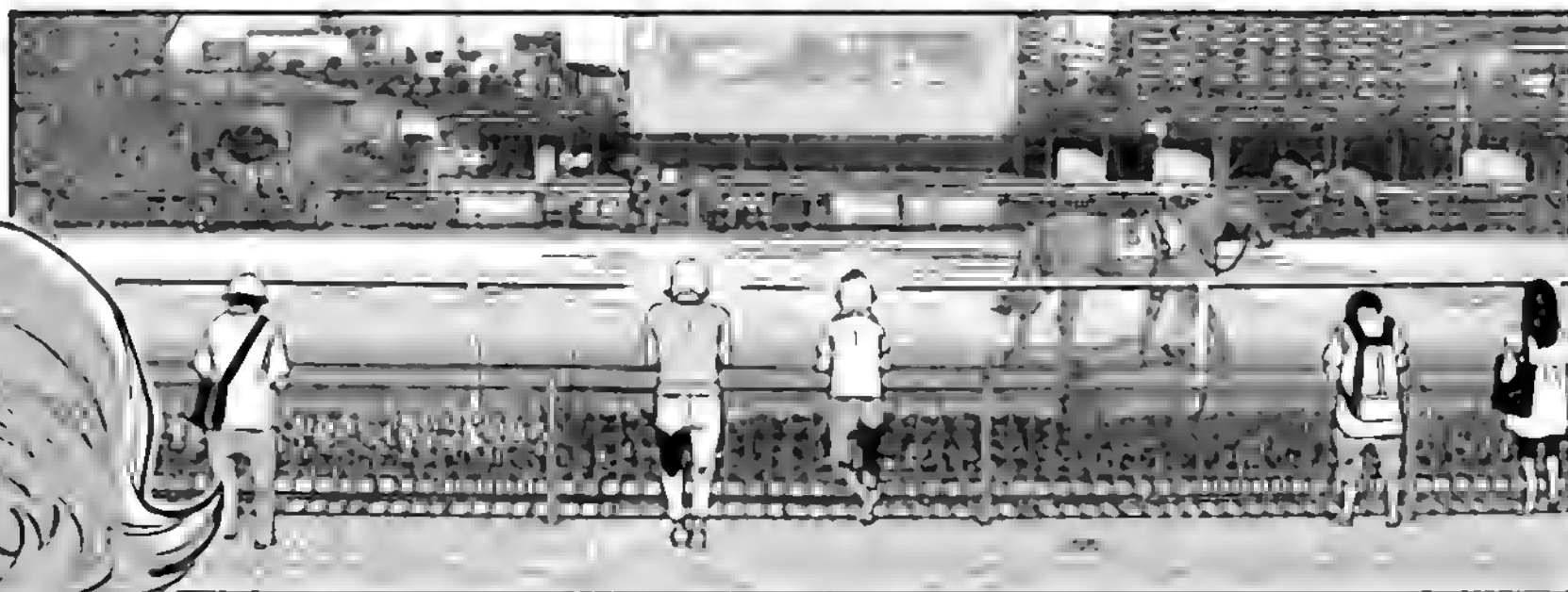












...IT'S
ABOUT
TO COME
AROUND!

SAKURABA-
SAN.

WEIWUSHU
RIDER...





OWNER OF ZECT TOKYO
RYUJI SAKURABA

HE'LL WIN
THIS TIME.
I'M SURE
OF IT.

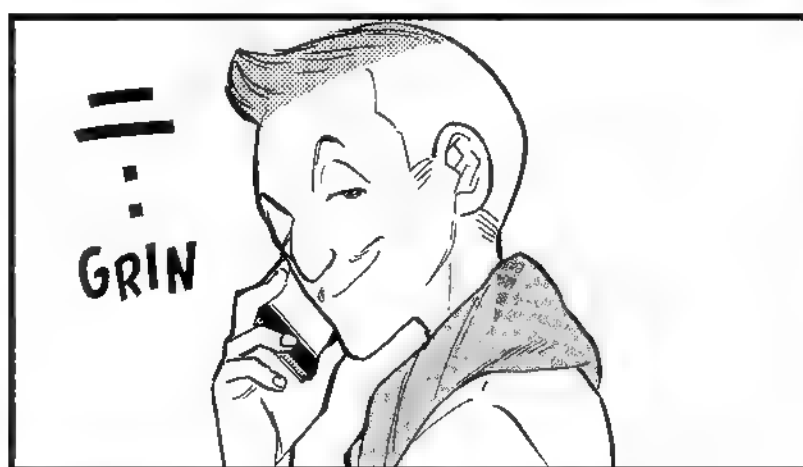
I'VE FLOWN
TO AMERICA
COUNTLESS
TIMES TO BREED
THAT PRIZED
HORSE.

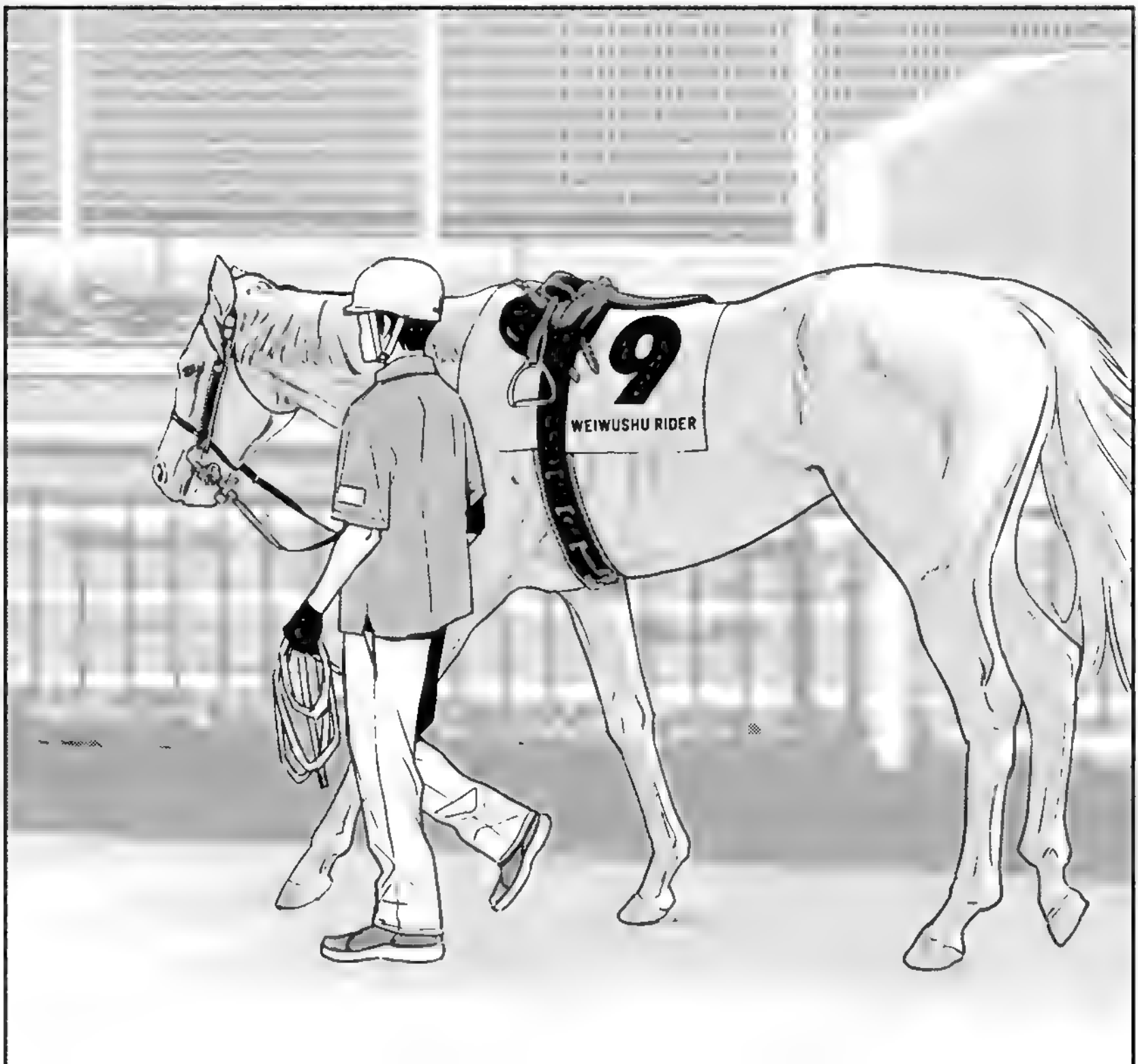


THIS IS
THE EVENT
PLANNER,
MESHIHARA.
MESSHI
SPEAKING!

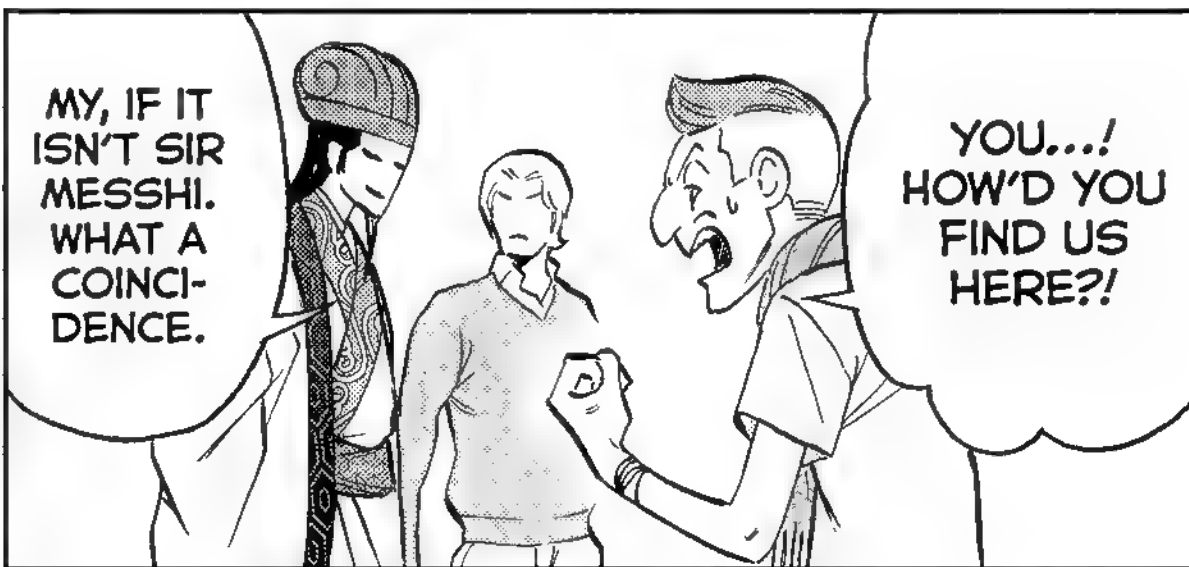
YEAH,
HEY!

MUSIC EVENT PLANNER
TAKESHI MESHIHARA
(NICKNAME: MESSHI)



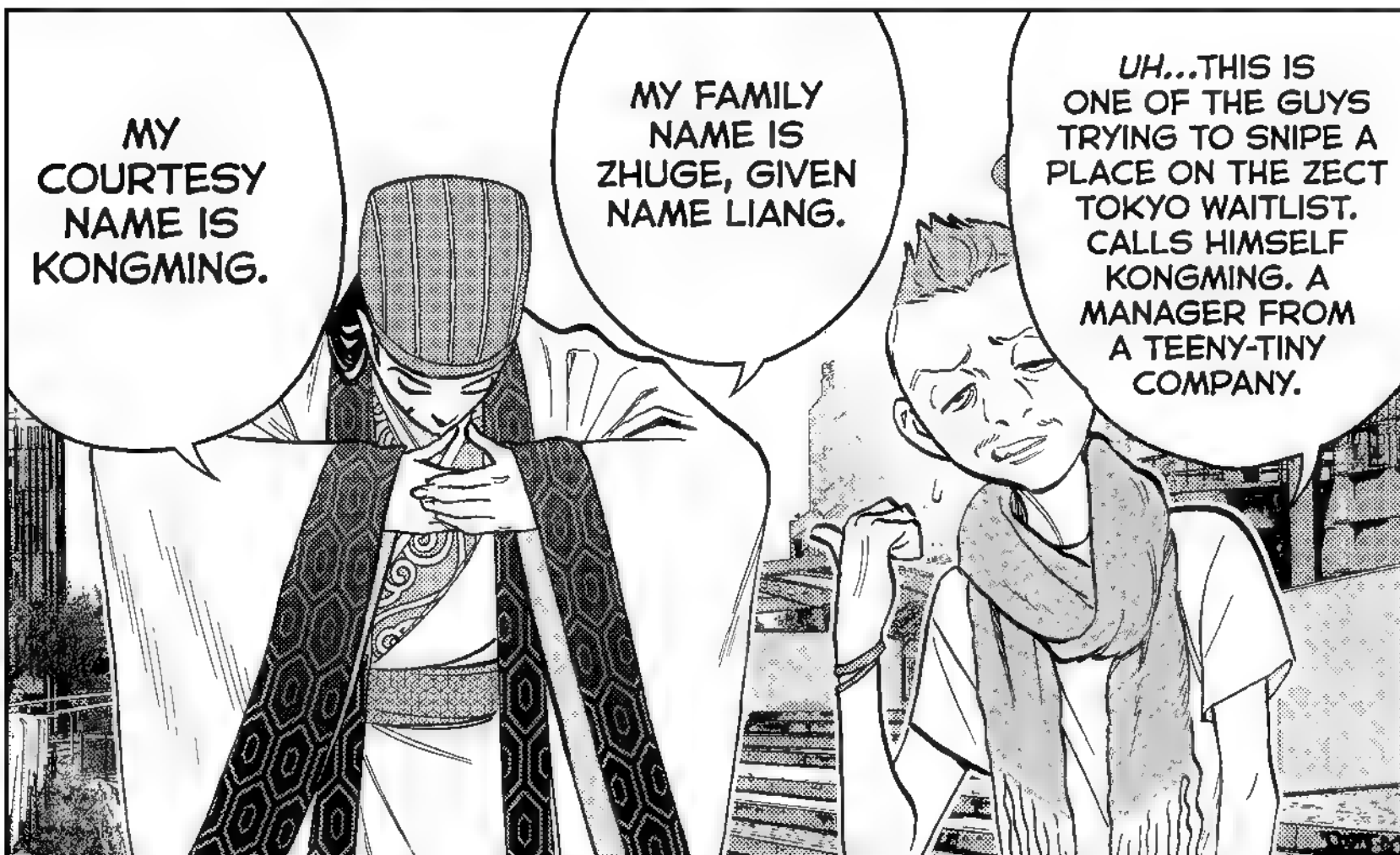






MY, IF IT
ISN'T SIR
MESSHI.
WHAT A COINCI-
DENCE.

YOU...!
HOW'D YOU
FIND US
HERE?!



MY
COURTESY
NAME IS
KONGMING.

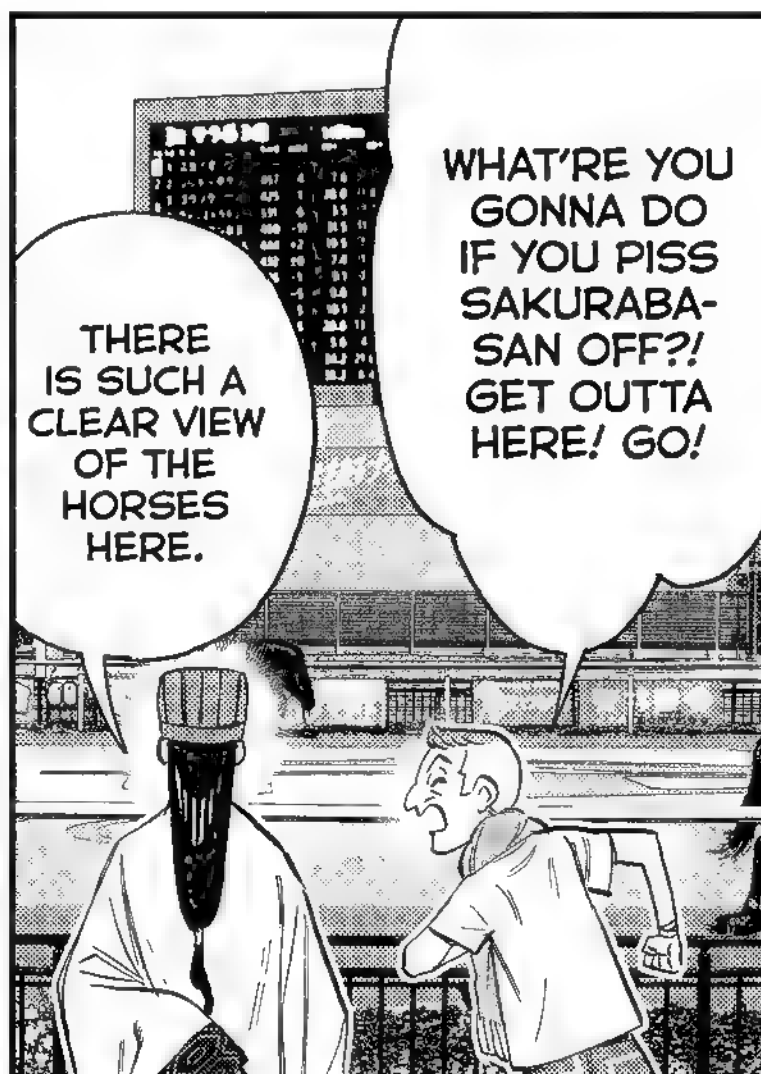
MY FAMILY
NAME IS
ZHUGE, GIVEN
NAME LIANG.

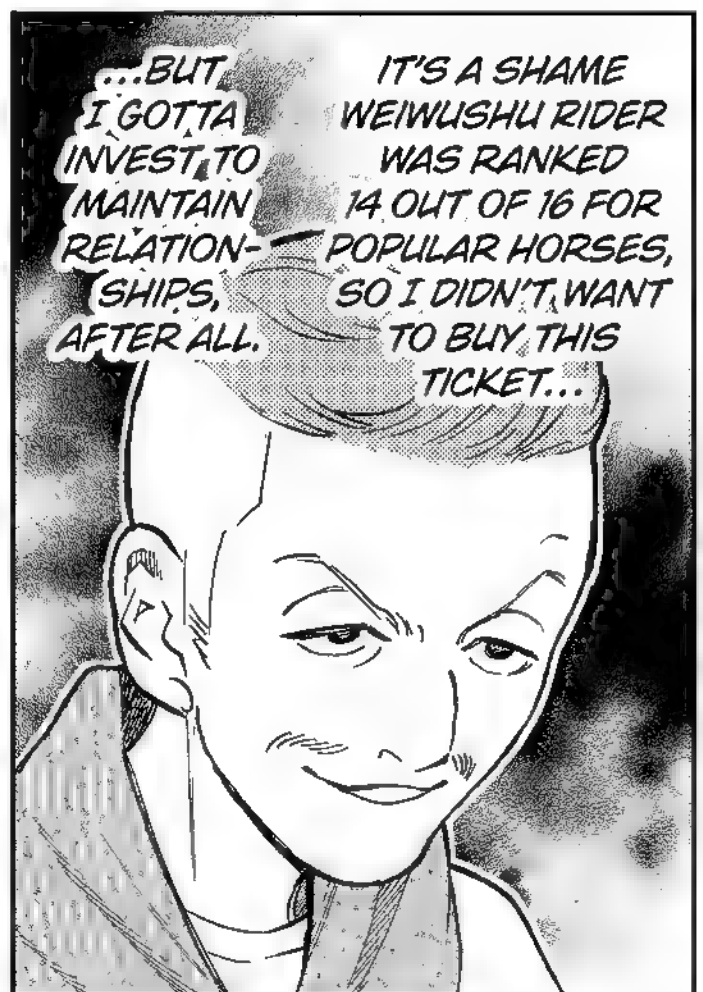
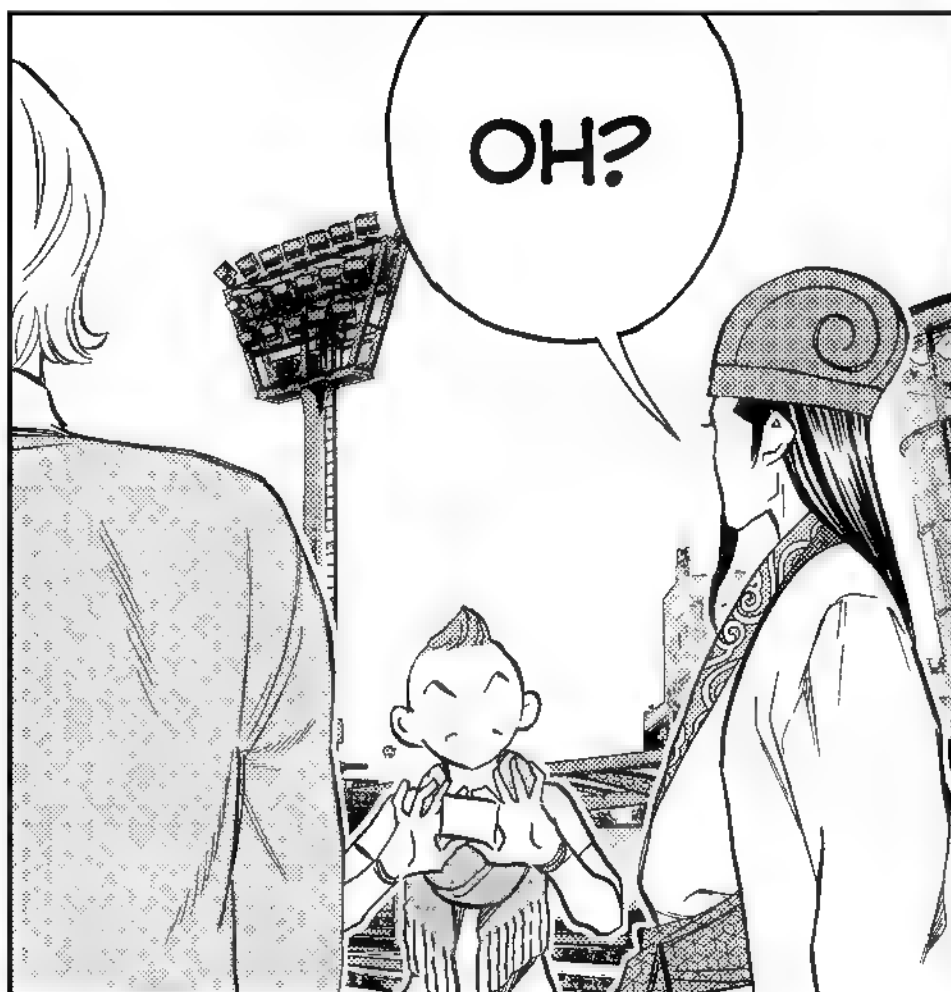
UH...THIS IS
ONE OF THE GUYS
TRYING TO SNIPE A
PLACE ON THE ZECT
TOKYO WAITLIST.
CALLS HIMSELF
KONGMING. A
MANAGER FROM
A TEENY-TINY
COMPANY.

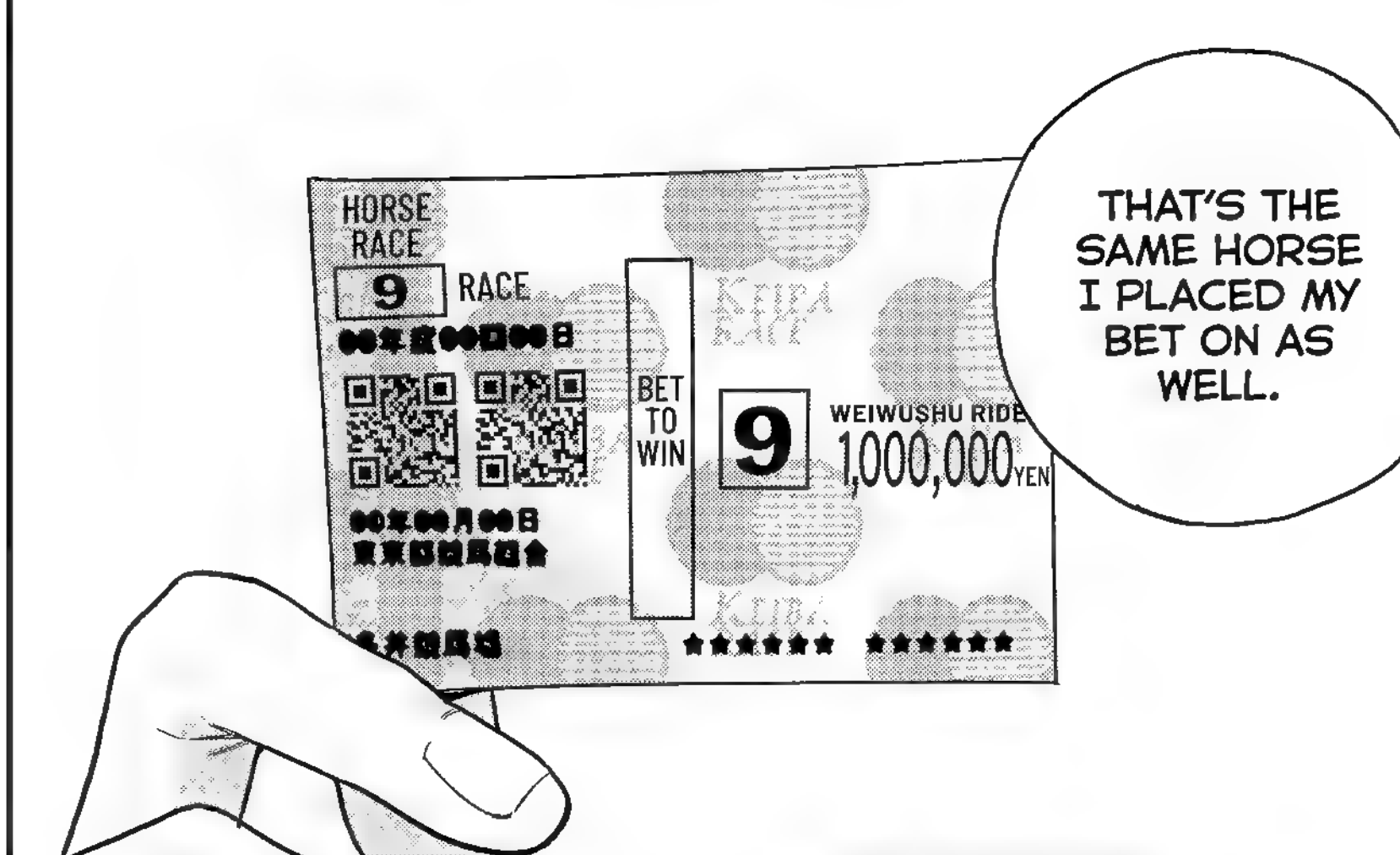


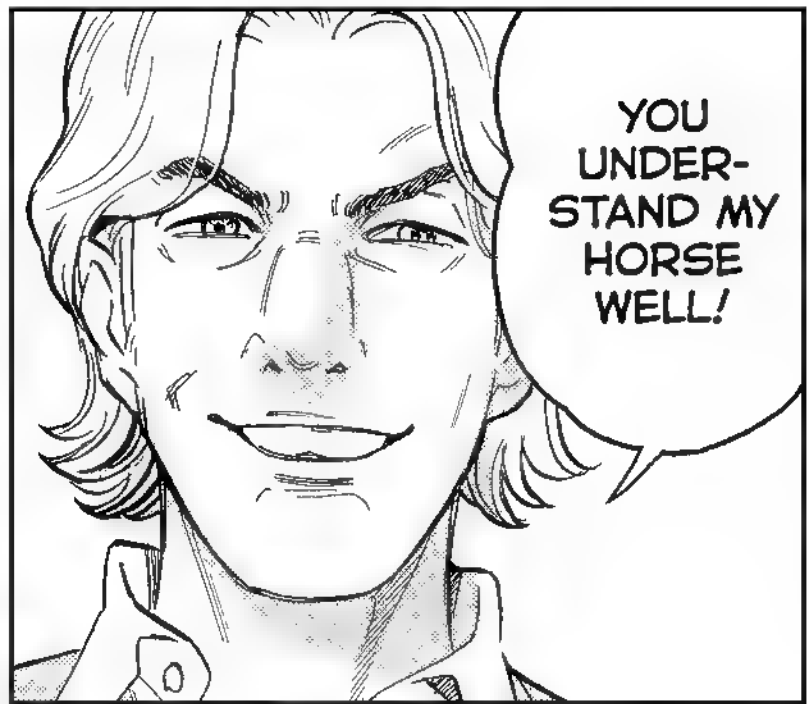
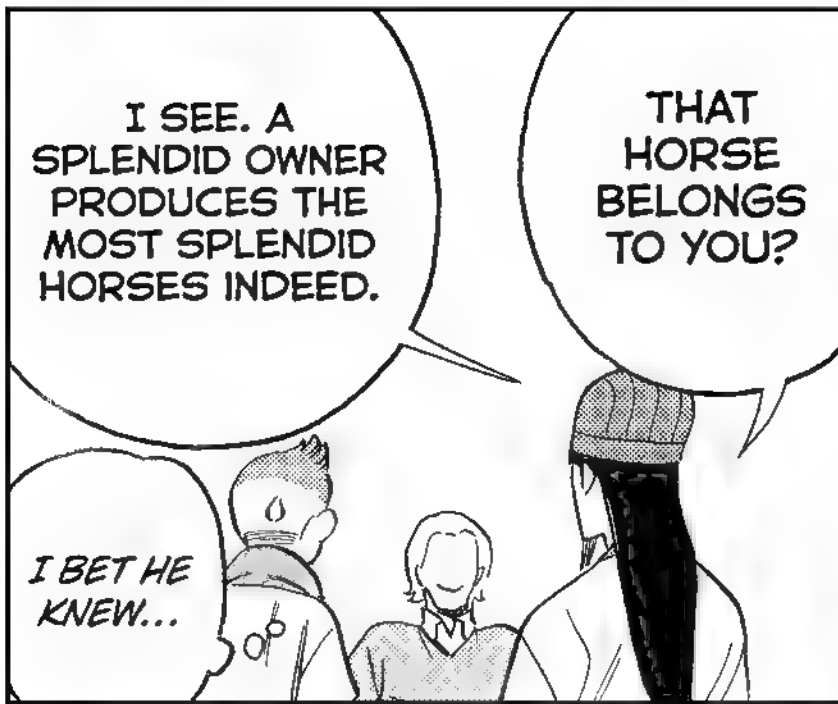
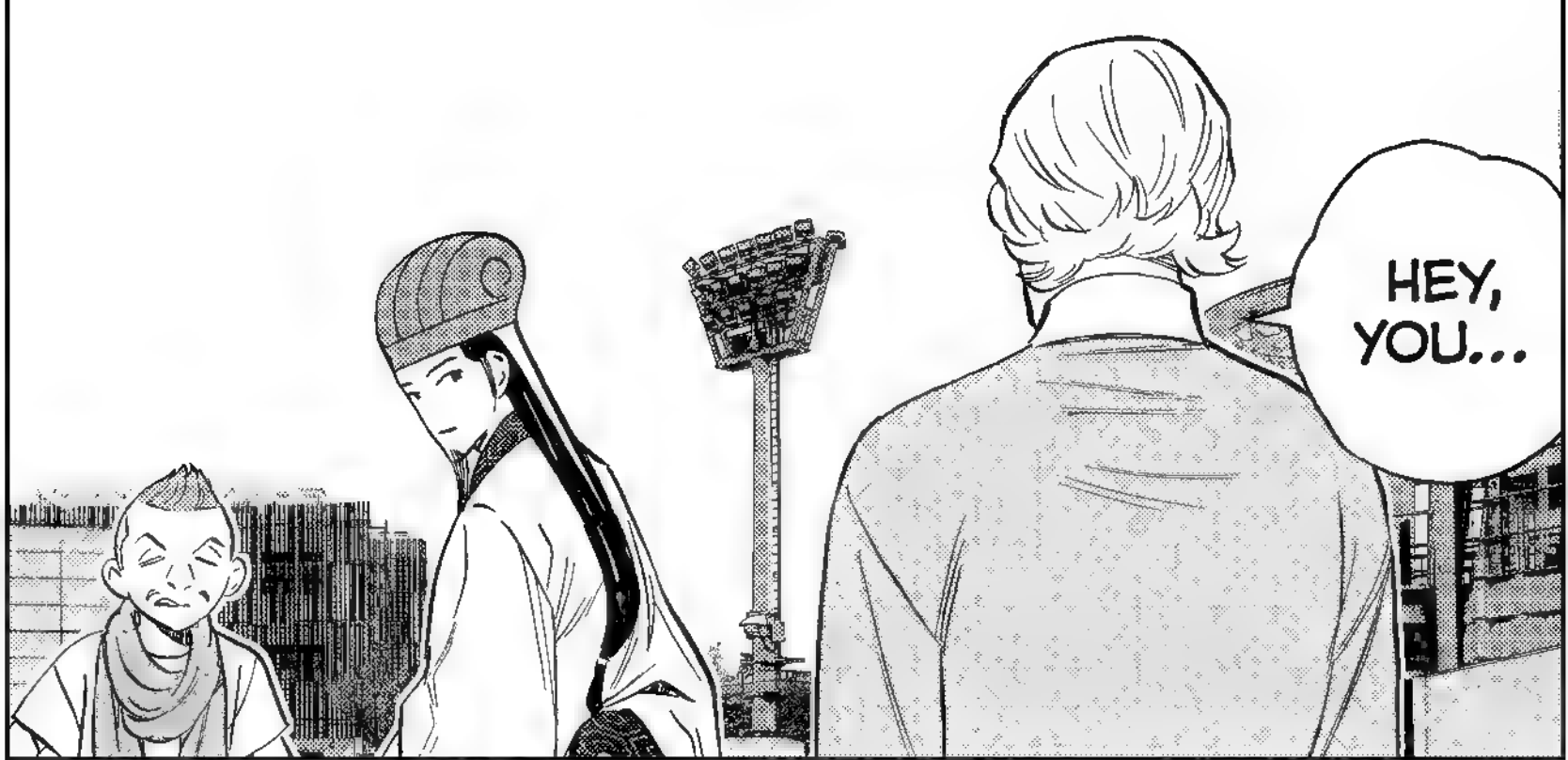
IT IS AN
HONOR TO
MAKE YOUR
ACQUAINTANCE.

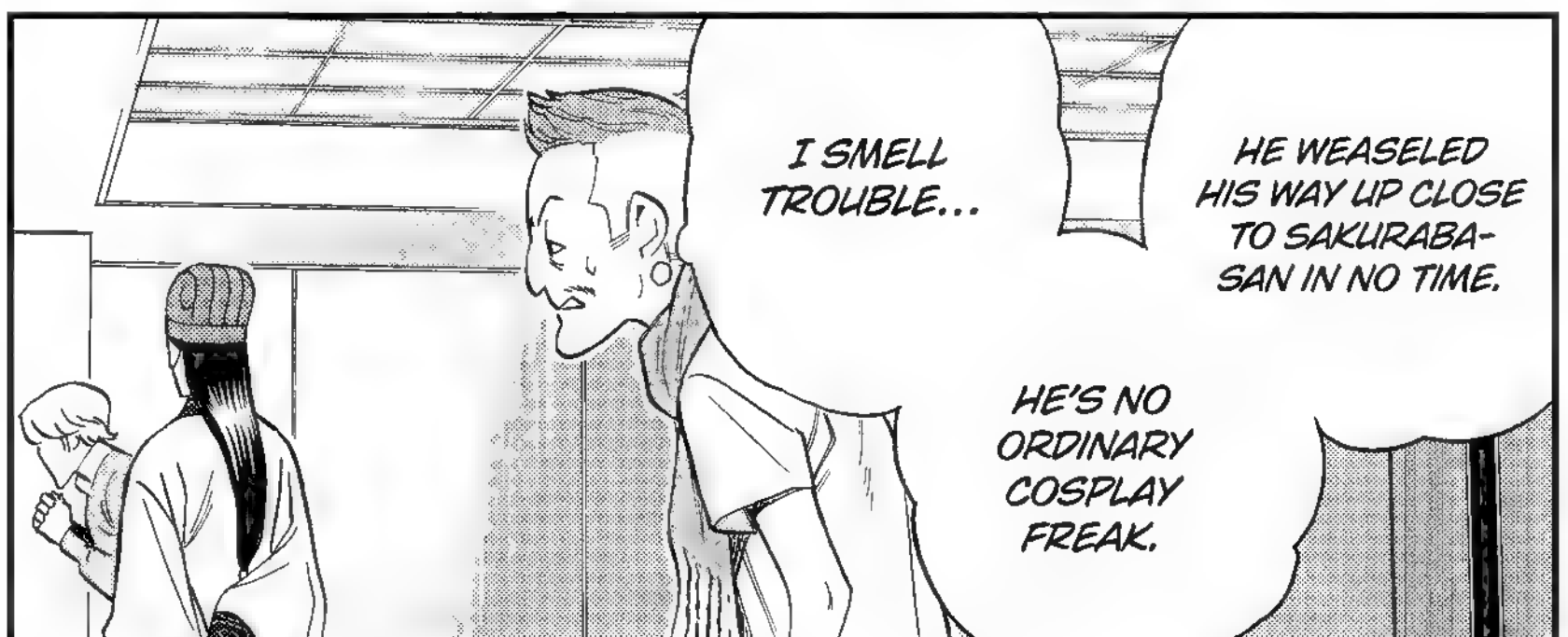
RYUJI
SAKURABA,
GOOD SIR.

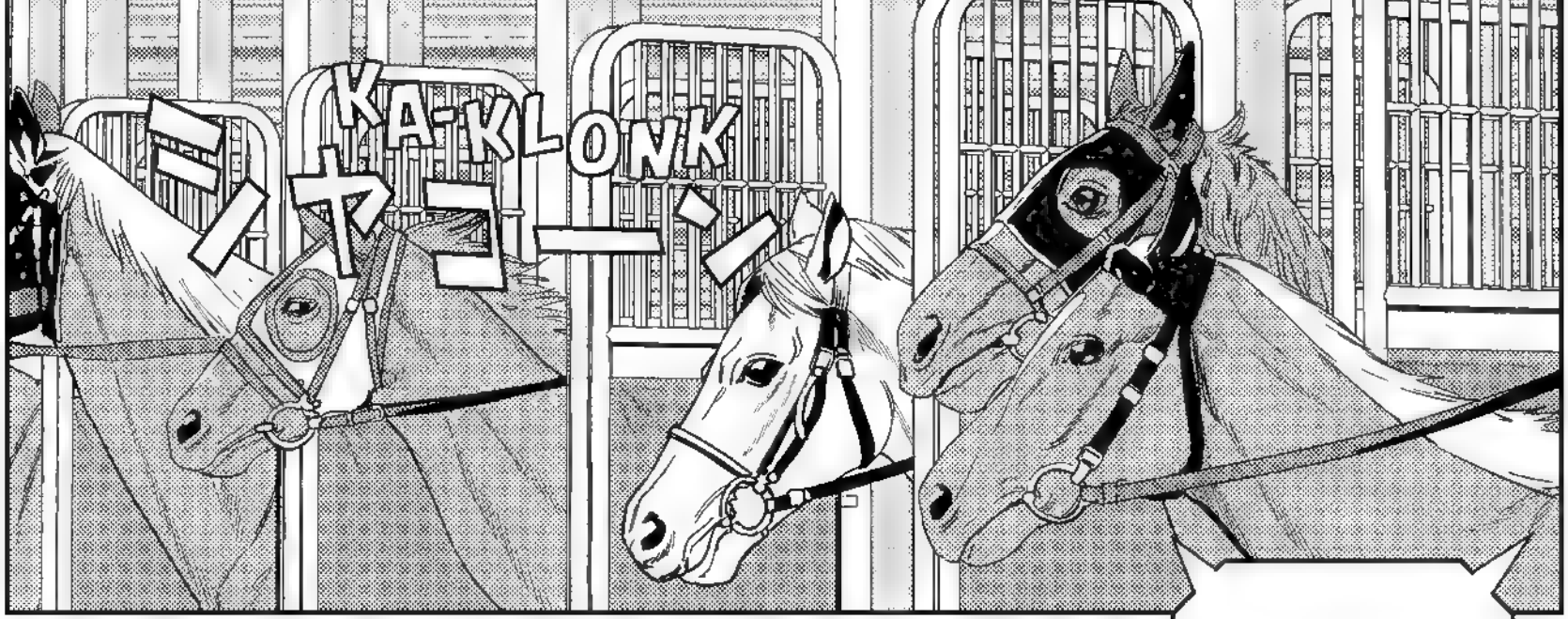












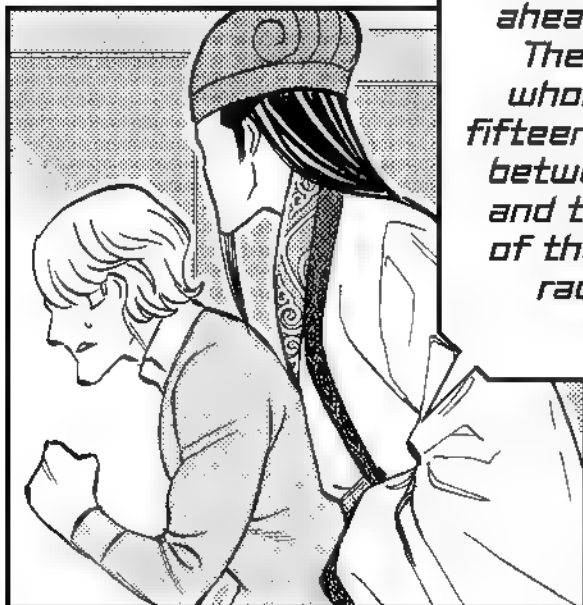
KA-KLONK
コ
ー



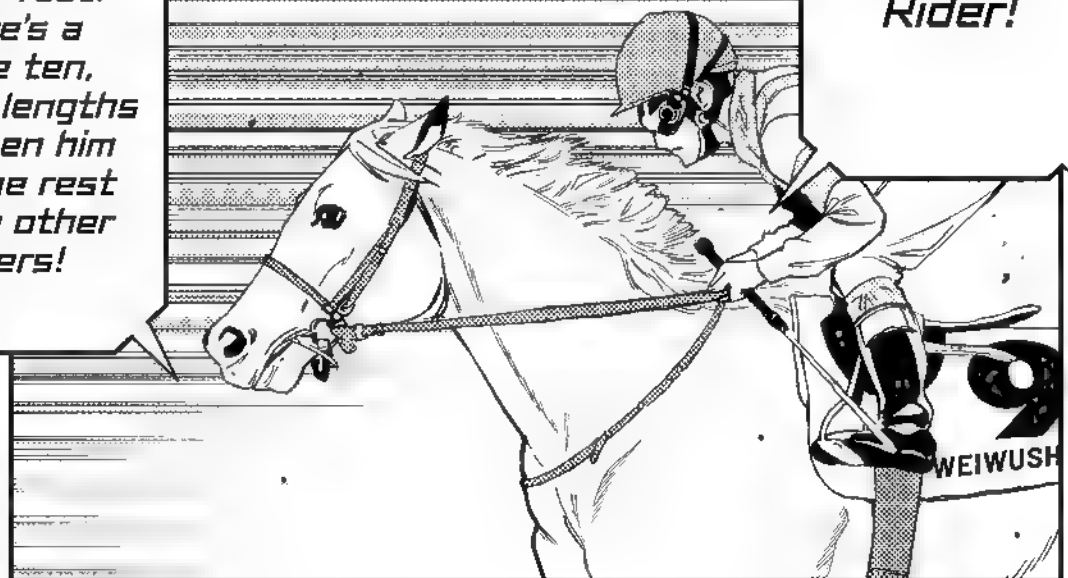
The gates
opened!

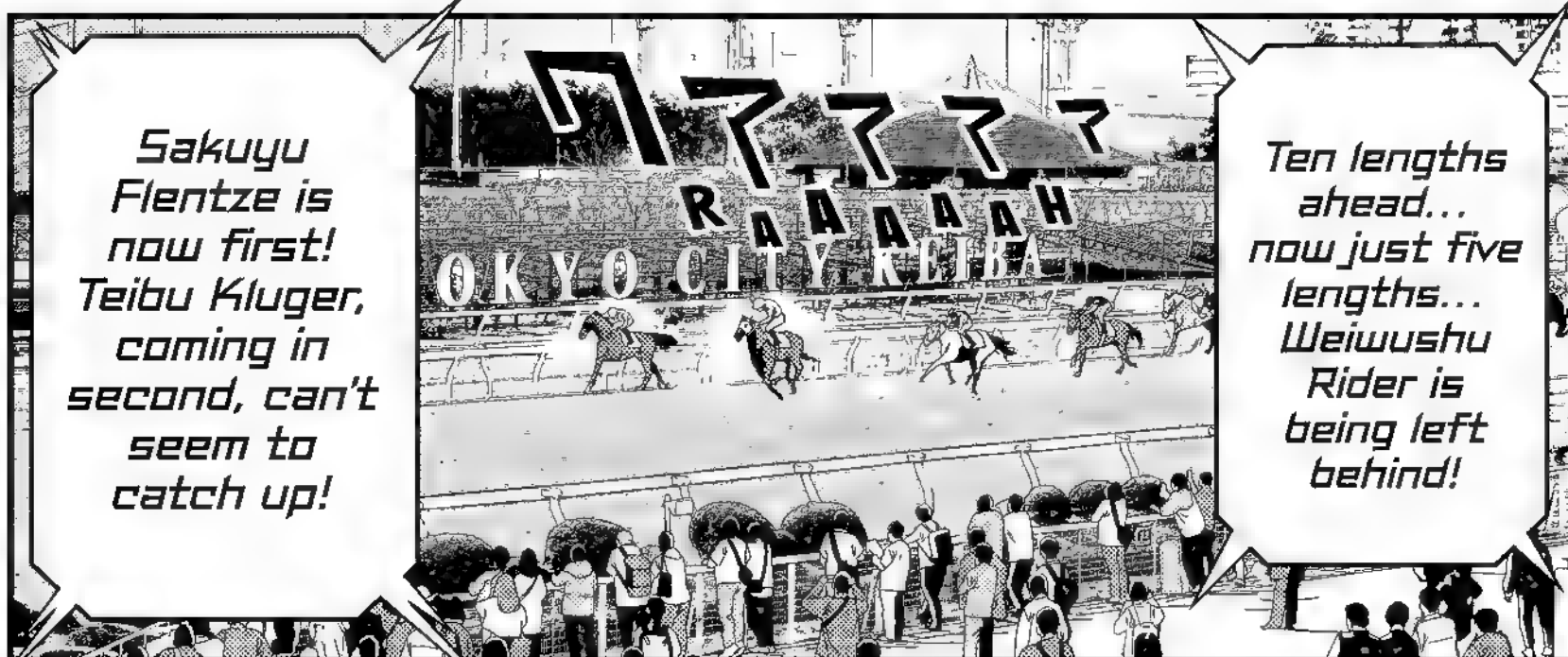


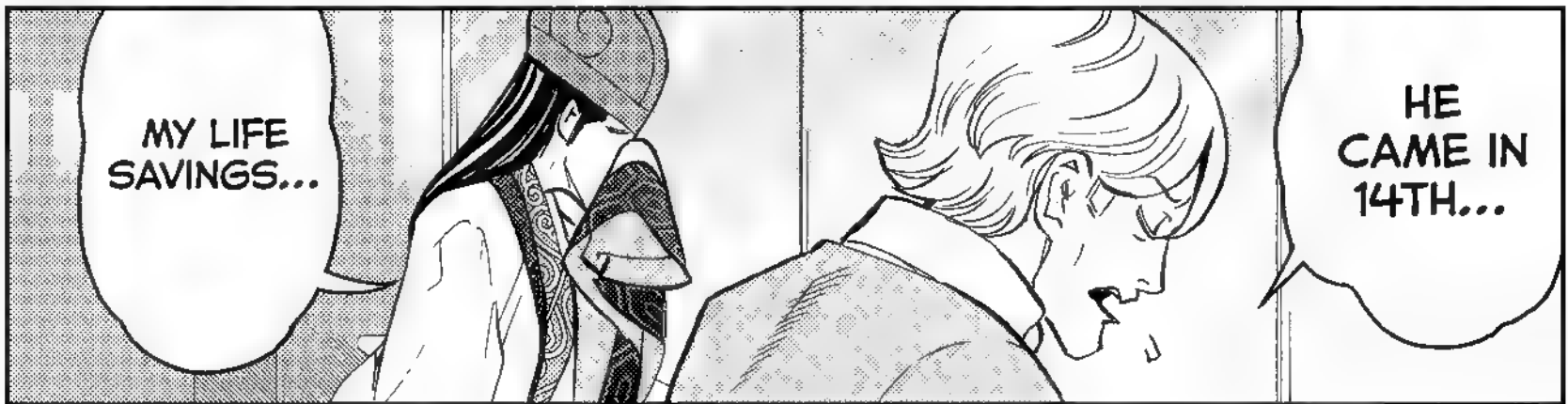
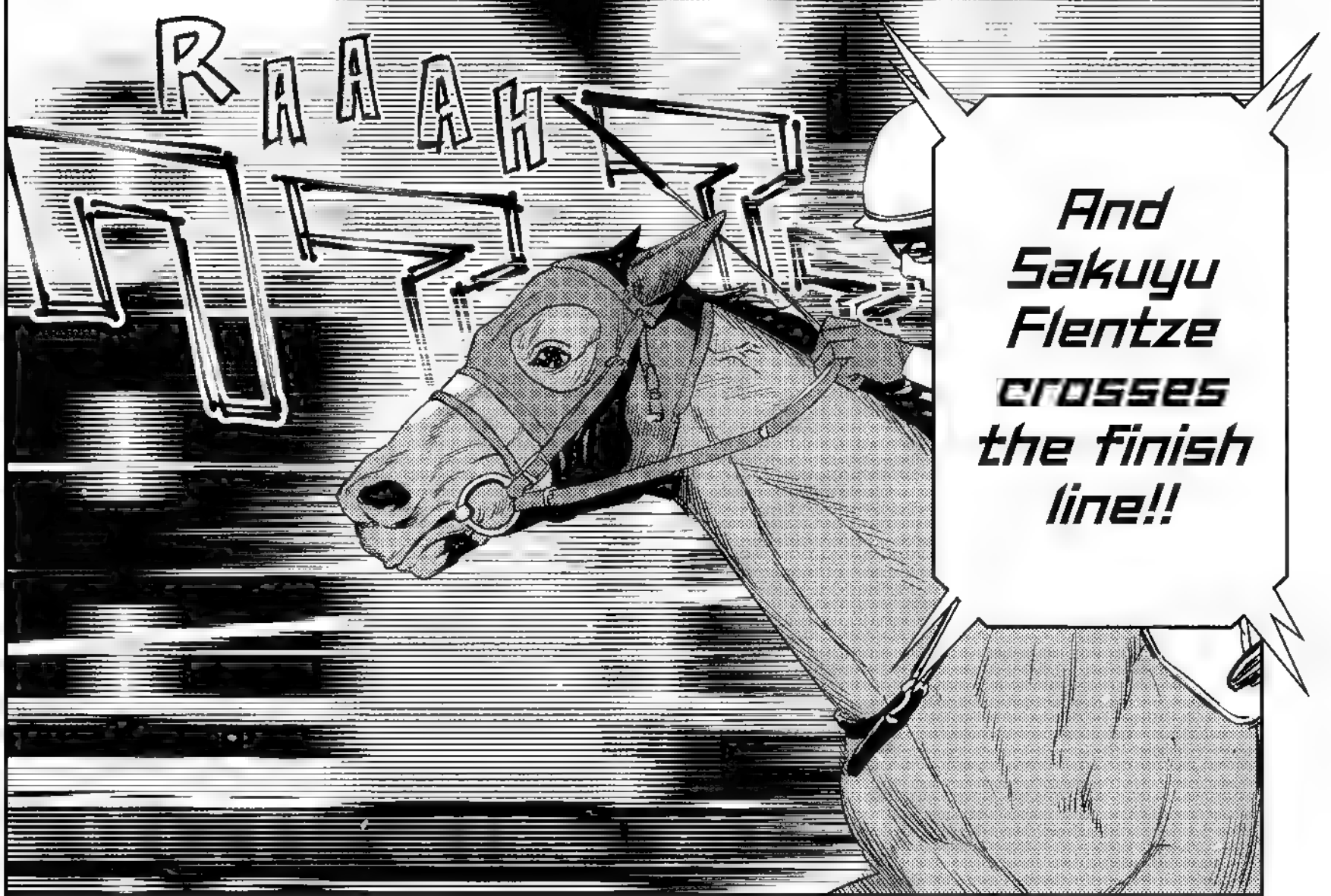
In first,
Weiwushu
Rider!

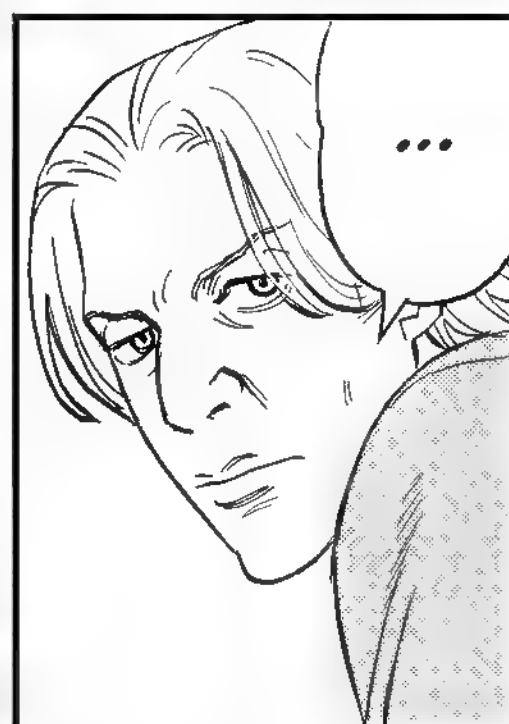
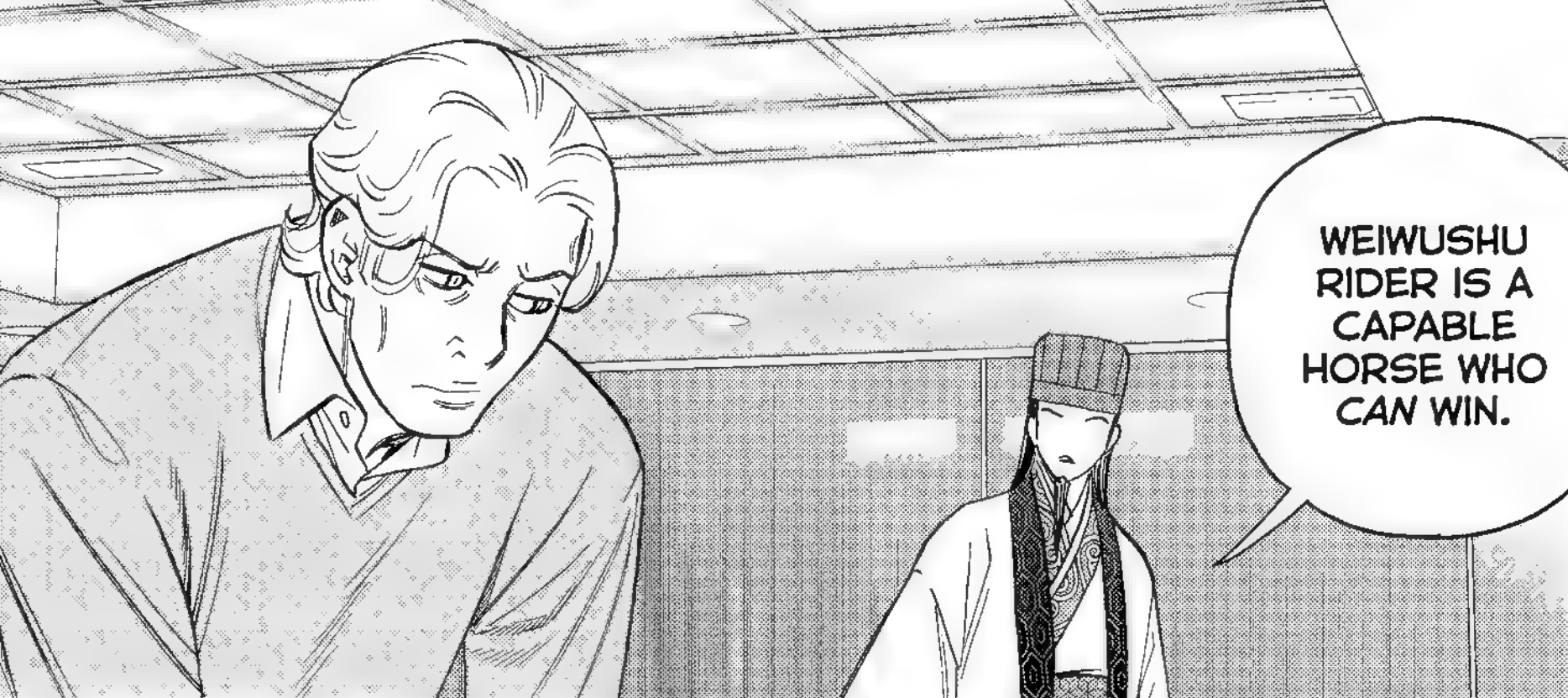


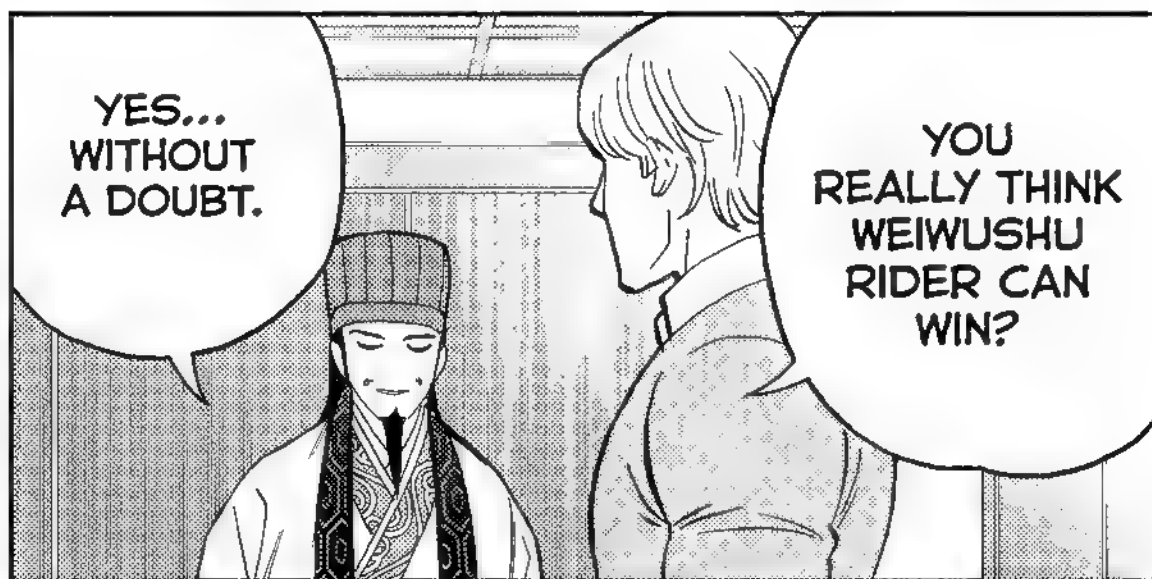
He's pulling
ahead fast!
There's a
whole ten,
fifteen lengths
between him
and the rest
of the other
racers!





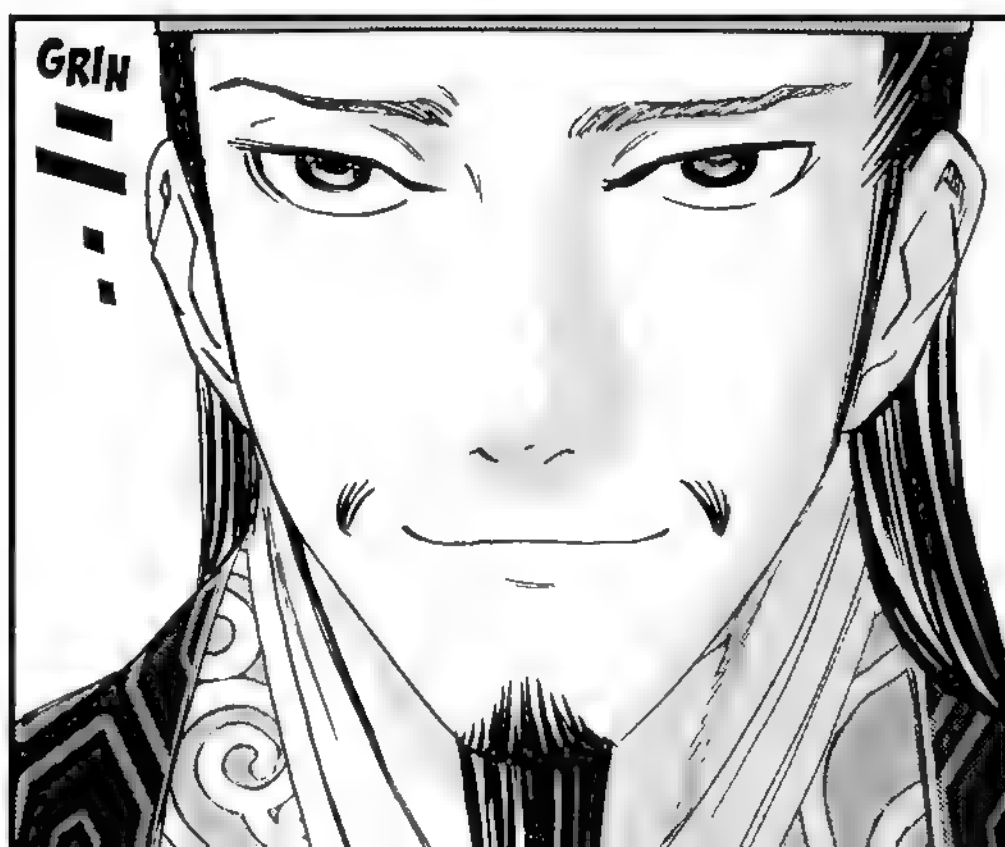








I LIKE
THIS GUY.



CHAPTER 113 END



EXTRA

SPECIAL SHORT STORY

KONGMING, TO THE NEO PUB

Yuto Yotsuba

► **“HEY, KONGMING.** Do you have any free time before your shift starts?” The voice of the boss, Kobayashi, interrupts Kongming as he cleans away.

With a cloth tied tightly on his head and his hands on the mop gliding across the floor, Kongming pauses the mysterious song he was humming to himself and looks up.

“Ah, yes. The club’s opening late tonight due to the dance event.”

“Glad you catch on fast. Let’s go and check Shibuya out.”

“Oh? We’ll be visiting the town, then?”

Kongming gives a warm smile as he rests the mop against the counter, his long beard swaying lightly as he moves.

“Information can turn the tides of war. What’s more, the fads come and go swiftly in Shibuya. I may not seem like the type but I do go out to check when new things pop up.”

Although most would be intimidated by Kobayashi with his hair gelled back and sunglasses covering his eyes, he turns to Kongming and gives him a toothy grin. Kongming responds with a mysteriously knowing nod of his head.

“There is no such thing as useless information. You can never have enough intel,” he says.

“The basics of military tactics.” Kobayashi crosses his arms, happily nodding in agreement.

“Now then, where will we be heading?”

“A neo pub.”

“A neo pub...? *Hm*. That has quite the mysterious ring to it.”

“It’s been pretty popular with them young kids these days. Apparently, Eiko’s been goin’ to some of these with her friends, too. I’ll treat ya—just come check ’em out with me,” Kobayashi urges Kongming as he steps out of the BB Lounge doors. Seeing his boss leave, Kongming quickly follows after him.

It’s 8 pm, evening in Shibuya, too early to see men in suits rushing to catch the final train. And yet, the Dozenaka street is bustling with excitement and the air is filled with cheerful energy. Although it’s unusual to see a scary man with slicked-back hair and sunglasses walking next to man who looked like he was dropped into this world from *The Three Kingdoms* move through these busy streets, no one rushes to pull out their phones and snap a picture of this surreal image. As the two pass by familiar executives, they exchange quick greetings before they continue on their way. Before he’d even realized, Kongming had become quite a popular individual among the executives of Shibuya and the areas around it.

Before long, the pair make their way into a small street off of Dogenzaka and stop in front of a retro pub with neon lights flashing around its entrance. In what appears to be in an old-fashioned, artistic font, the words “Shibuyami Café Pub” is displayed proudly on the front.

“Oh? This small shop appears to cater to working folk of society in the day, but at night, it shifts to a trendy pub that welcomes young women. I see, I see. Now this is quite interesting indeed.” Kongming, having seemingly pulled his fan out of nowhere, begins to wave it gently in contemplation as he stares at the pub’s display. Anyone watching from the side would immediately try to avoid this shady-looking man, if they didn’t know who he was.

“From what I know, this pub tries to portray a mix of trendy-retro with modern vibes. It’s true, though. It definitely has a refined and polished look to it.”

“Oh? This may be helpful to reference when planning Lady Eiko’s promotional materials. Let us go in.”
At Kongming’s suggestion, the pair step into Shibuyami Café Pub.

“Welcome...is it just the two of you?” The employee standing inside the doors greets the pair with a flustered look.

Unbothered by the employee’s reaction, Kobayashi and Kongming speak briefly with the employee before they’re

led into the pub and to their seats. Kobayashi glances at the menu before he slowly pulls his sunglasses up.

“Octopus-shaped wieners? Alcoholic ice cream float? Huh, this is one interestin’ menu.”

Meanwhile, Kongming’s eyes are darting around the pub. “It does seem that their main customer base is young women. However, there seem to be quite a few men in here as well. Everyone looks pleasantly classy.”

Kobayashi glances up from the menu at Kongming and raises an eyebrow. “Is it that different from how it was in the era of *The Three Kingdoms*?”

“Indeed. Pubs, or the equivalent of a pub at that time, were filled with working men. It varies with different shops, but from my knowledge, there were never any such establishments targeted at women.”

“Huh.”

“Japan is a safe country. That must be one of the reasons why people of this country can feel comfortable walking about and drinking at night.”

“Ya say that, but Shu was also pretty safe, weren’t it?”

“Why, of course. It had strict, fair rules and regulations instilled by the state, after all.”

“I’d expect no less of the Imperial Chancellor, Kongming.”

“I don’t deserve such praise. I am truly a troublesome

superior, often scolded by my subordinates for overworking myself,” Kongming says, bowing his head deeply.

As the two chat away, they eventually summon a waiter and order alcoholic floats for both of them. For snacks, they order a serving of octopus-shaped wieners, grilled egg omelets, pickled cucumbers, and edamame.

Kobayashi’s features twist into a grimace after taking a sip of his alcoholic ice cream float. “It’s sweet. This is definitely geared for women.”

“It’s not bad. The bits of ice cream that touch the ice have frozen solid, making it quite tasty to chew.” Gracefully, Kongming scoops up a spoonful of the ice cream and brings it up to his mouth. Meanwhile, Kobayashi guzzles down the alcohol that settled at the bottom of the cup and avoids the ice cream with his straw before ordering a simple beer.

“Gotta go with draft beer.” Kobayashi quickly throws back the mug of beer the employee brings over and lets out a loud sigh as he finishes.

As the two continue to glance around the pub, enjoying the atmosphere, their conversation eventually leads them to the battle of Yiling as Kobayashi bombards Kongming with questions.

The battle of Yiling, or the battle to avenge Guan Yu as some call it, was a battle between the Shu and the Wu. This

battle occurred in the latter half of the history of *The Three Kingdoms*, where Liu Bei suffered a great loss against Lu Xun in Kongming's absence.

After his third beer, Kobayashi has lost his filter and words begin to slip through his lips with little thought. "Buuut... wasn't there any way to stop the battle of Yiling?"

"Guan Yu's death had a terribly great impact on my lord, Liu Bei. Even thinking back upon the pained visage of my liege brings me grave sorrow. Unfortunately, one's emotions may overcome even the most simple logic..."

"Things would've ended differently if you'd gone with 'em, right? But oh well. Would've, could've, should've. It is what it is." With his face flushed lightly, Kobayashi thrusts the cup of beer out towards Kongming.

Kongming finishes his second float and straightens his back.

"It's pointless to pursue assumptions about the past. Life is like the bubbles in this ice cream float." Kongming's eyes fall on a tiny bubble as it rises to the surface of the green drink. "If Fa Zheng had lived, then the wheels of fate would've made a different turn. Losing Ma Ling in the battle resulted in a terrible disadvantage for Shu. However, the results are what they are. Even if I wished to return to that time and change the trajectory of fate, it is simply impossible. Time treats all equally."

Although this topic may seem too tragic for a neo pub like this, a small smile creeps its way up to Kongming's lips as he reminisces. Upset, Kobayashi brings his cup of beer down to the table as he stabs an octopus-shaped wiener with his fork and bites into it roughly.

"On that note, there's also Pang Tong's death at the Valley of the Fallen Phoenix. What a shame! I wish I could've seen Pang Tong and Kongming workin' together to conquer the battlefield! Aaah, *The Three Kingdoms* is such a tragic time, but it's so damn interestin'!"

"The most important things in life are to never forget your roots, to always remain resolute, to uphold righteousness, and to never give up on your dreams. Maintain this course and your path will open before you."

"Who cares 'bout that! Go! You needa go to the battle of Yuling, right now! You're **neo Kongming!** Go get reincarnated back in time and beat Lu Xun's ass!"

"That would be rather difficult." Kongming smiles, amused at Kobayashi's impossible demand.

But then suddenly, Kobayashi freezes up, as if a thought just crept into his mind. "Speakin' of that, reincarnation's been pretty popular lately. Ya know, that *isekai* stuff. Is that how you became Eiko's tactician, then?"

"Who knows? Perhaps. At any rate, I am most fulfilled to

have encountered music, regardless.”

“Heeey...are ya really from *The Three Kingdoms*?”

“Yes. I am.”

“*Heh*. You’re always sayin’ that without even so much as crackin’ a smile. Oh well, you’re just as smart as the real thing anyways.” Kobayashi grins as he stares at Kongming. In a way, Kobayashi has grown impressed by how devoted Kongming is to remaining in character.

“Why, thank you.”

“Ya better stop Eiko if she ever goes wild outta her mind. Don’t let this turn into another battle of Yiling.”

“Of course.”

“Say, ya know you *can* be a bit more emotional sometimes. If you had been, then Liu Bei might’ve never sent out his troops. You can be *too* logical sometimes. Though I have no idea how you could’ve stopped Liu Bei.”

“I will take your advice to heart.” Kongming puts his hands together and lowers his head.

Kobayashi throws back his beer quickly before slamming it down on the table with a smile. “If ya ever quit bein’ Eiko’s tactician, we can make your whole adventure comin’ to Japan a movie. It’ll make a fun film.”

“You jest. No one would find a movie about me interesting. My life is as plain as they come.”

“Hah! I dunno ’bout that.” Kobayashi shrugs.

The two remained at the neo pub for quite some time as they chatted away, eating and drinking. Their conversations come and go as quickly as the bubbles in Kongming’s ice cream float. It wasn’t until they left the shop did Kobayashi realize that all he’d ever wanted was to speak with Kongming one-on-one like this.

-END-

Ya Boy Kongming! 14

Kodansha Digital Edition

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kodansha.us



WEIWUSHU
RIDER...

大向トレーニングセンター
OMUKAI TRAINING CENTER

CHAPTER 14 To Their Own Battles

...HAS
A TOP-TIER
PEDIGREE,
BUT HE HAS
A TERRIBLE
TEMPER.

AS YOU CAN SEE...
HE'S PRETTY FINNICKY.
IT EVEN TOOK A
VETERAN JOCKEY
A LOT OF TIME AND
EFFORT BEFORE THEY
COULD RIDE HIM.

ギョー" YANK

GAAAH!!

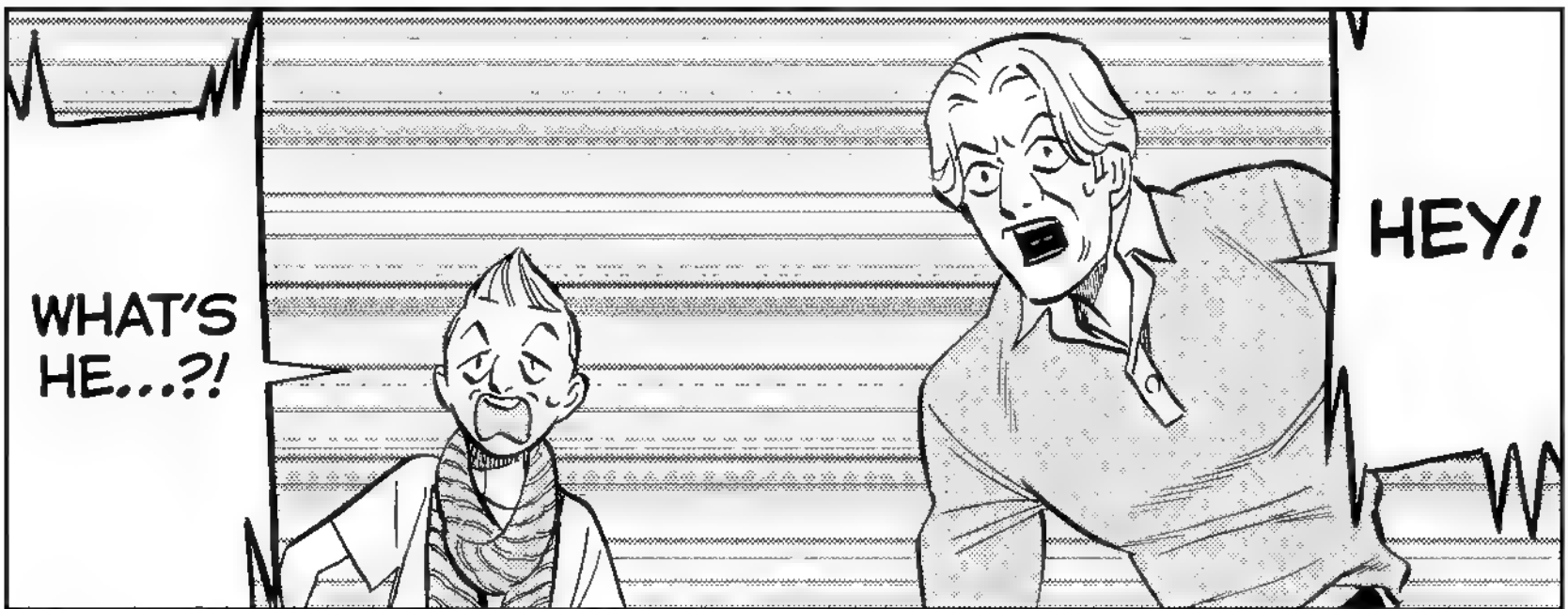
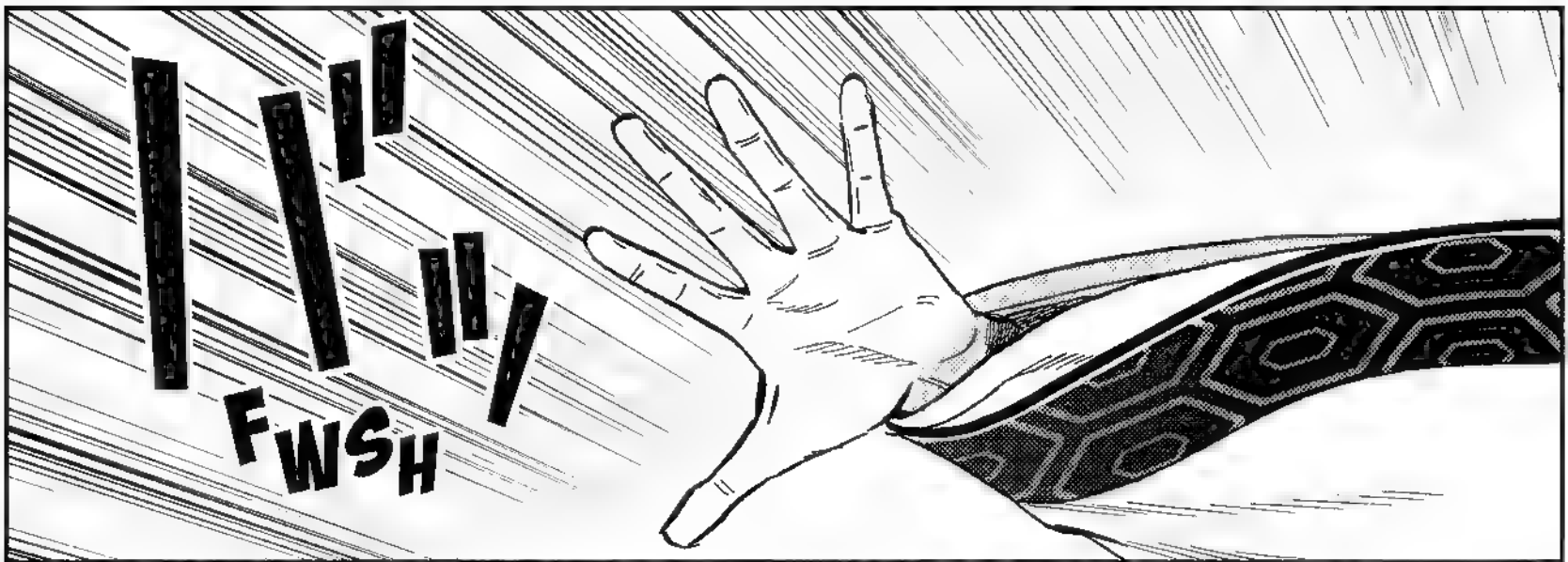
There,
there.

ANIMALS
LOVE ME.

JUST
WATCH.



REFERENCE ASSISTANCE: KAWASAKI HORSE RACING KOMUKAI TRAINING CENTER INSTRUCTOR SATORU FURUSAWA





HE'S
TAMED THE
HORSE?!

THERE,
THERE.



THIS IS
PRETTY SIMPLE,
COMPARED TO
A WARHORSE.



THAT BEING SAID...
THE LEGENDARY
WARHORSE, RED HARE-
SEKITOBA-WHO RAN A
THOUSAND LI IN ONE
DAY...HAS NEVER
ALLOWED ME ON
HIS BACK.*

*A LI IS A CHINESE MILE, EQUIVALENT TO ABOUT 1/3 OF AN ENGLISH MILE.



SAKURABA-
SAN! HE'S
MAKING
STUFF UP!
IT'S JUST A
FANTASY!

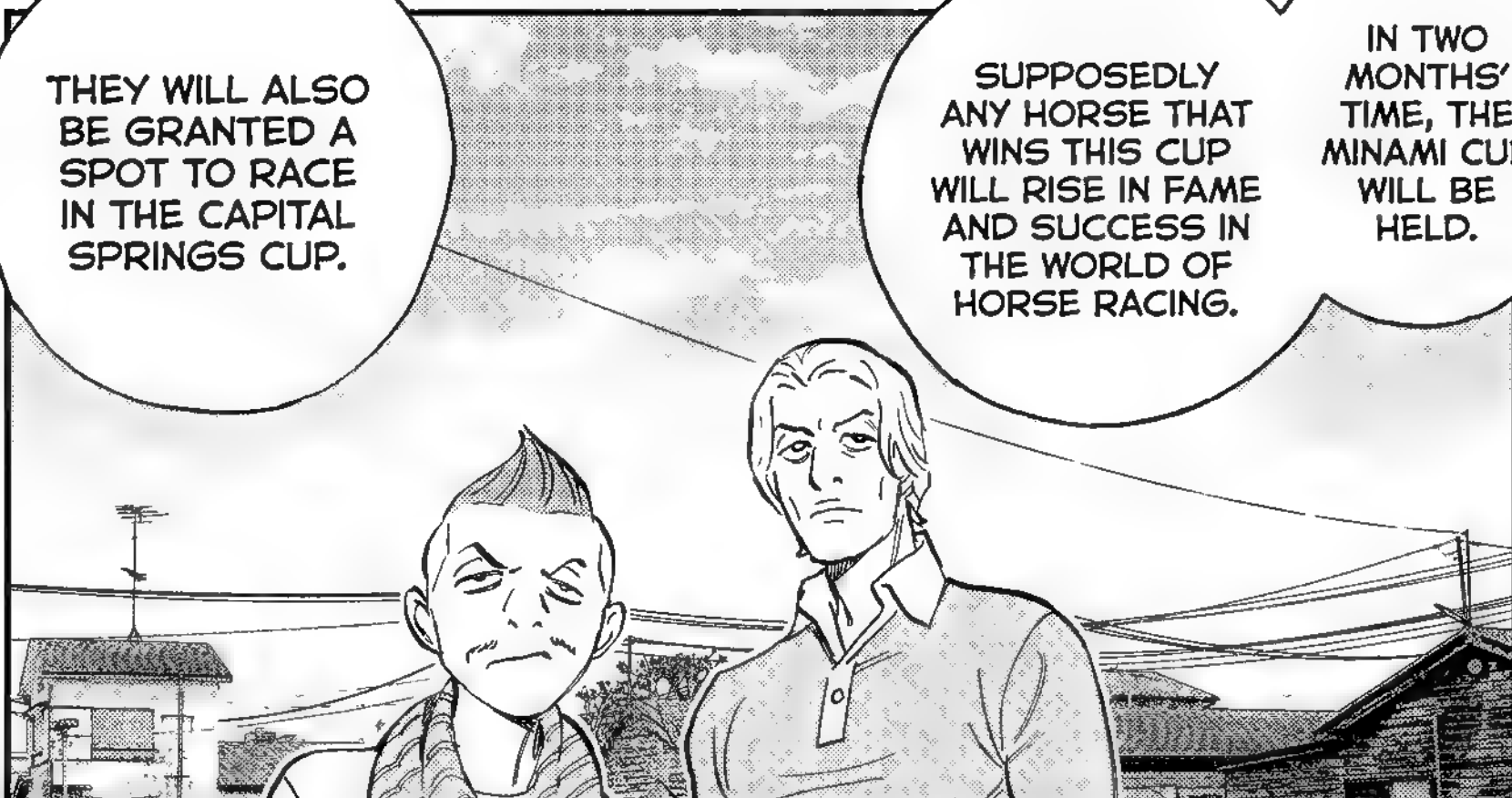
THE LEGENDARY
HORSE FROM
THE *THREE*
KINGDOMS THAT
SERVED LU BU
AND GUAN YU...



WEIWUSHU
RIDER IS NOT
MEANT TO
BE A FRONT-
RUNNER, BUT
A STALKER.*

IT SEEMS
LIKE THIS FINE
HORSE REFUSED
TO OBEY HIS
JOCKEY'S
ORDERS IN THE
LAST RACE.

*FRONT-RUNNER: A HORSE THAT HAS A FAVORABLE POSITION IN THE FRONT,
COMING OUT OF THE GATE FAST AND DASHING STRAIGHT FOR THE FINISH LINE.
STALKER: A HORSE THAT STAYS NEAR THE FRONT TO WEAR DOWN THE
FRONT-RUNNER AND OVERTAKES THEM AT THE LAST SECOND OF THE RACE.

A black and white manga panel showing two men standing in a town. The man on the left has a spiky hairstyle and a serious expression. The man on the right has long hair and a more neutral expression. They are standing in front of a town with traditional Japanese buildings and a utility pole.

THEY WILL ALSO
BE GRANTED A
SPOT TO RACE
IN THE CAPITAL
SPRINGS CUP.

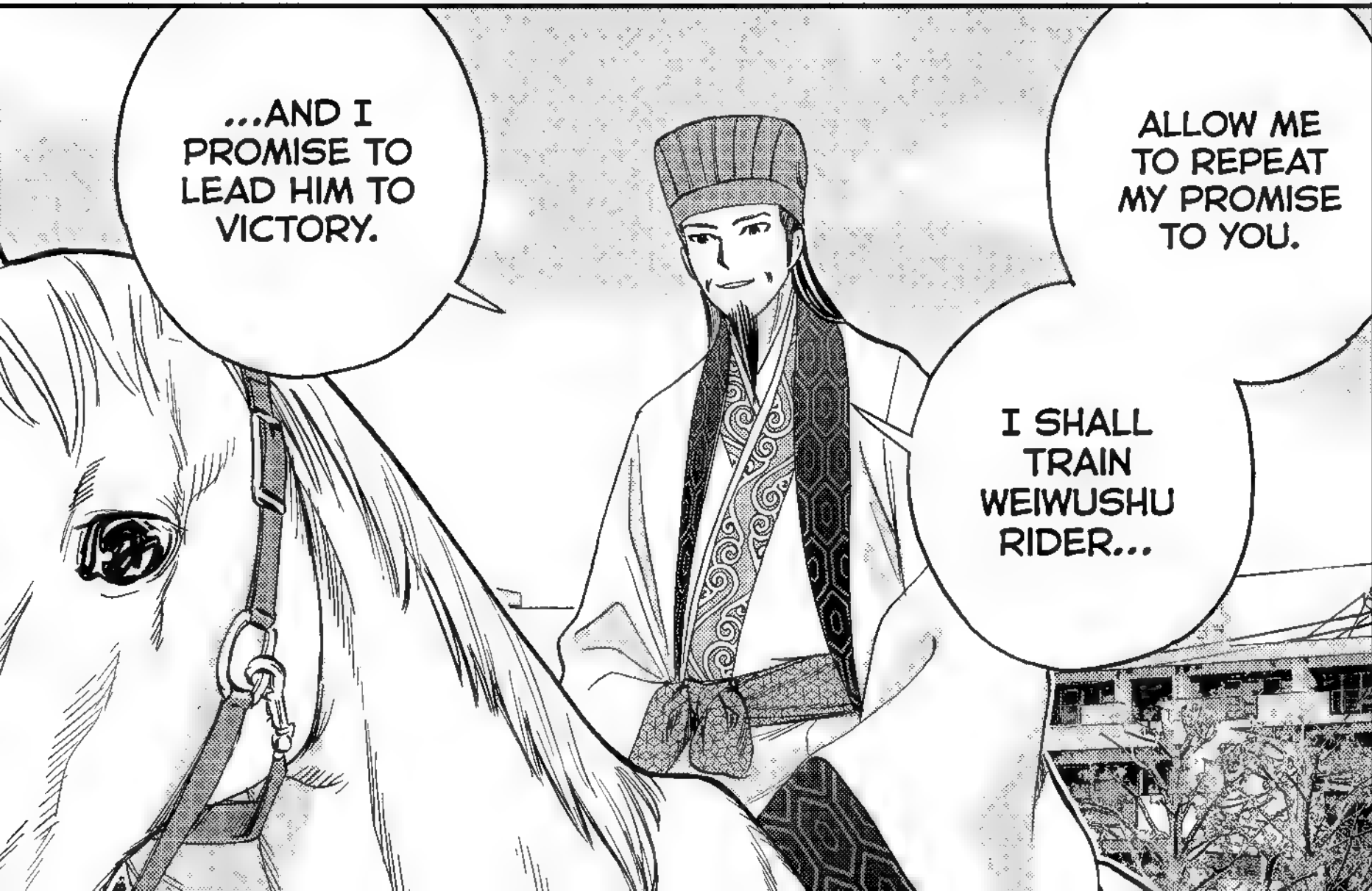
SUPPOSEDLY
ANY HORSE THAT
WINS THIS CUP
WILL RISE IN FAME
AND SUCCESS IN
THE WORLD OF
HORSE RACING.

IN TWO
MONTHS'
TIME, THE
MINAMI CUP
WILL BE
HELD.

A black and white manga panel showing a close-up of a man's face. He has long hair and a serious expression. A small speech bubble with three dots is on the left.

...

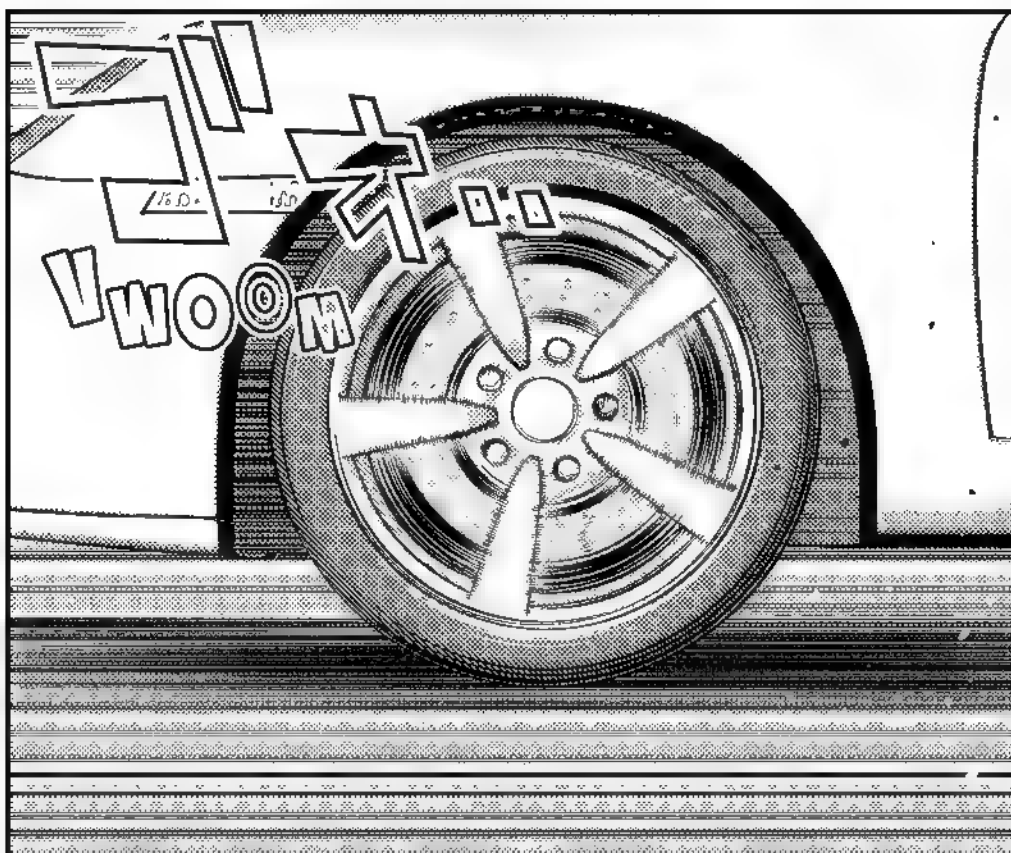
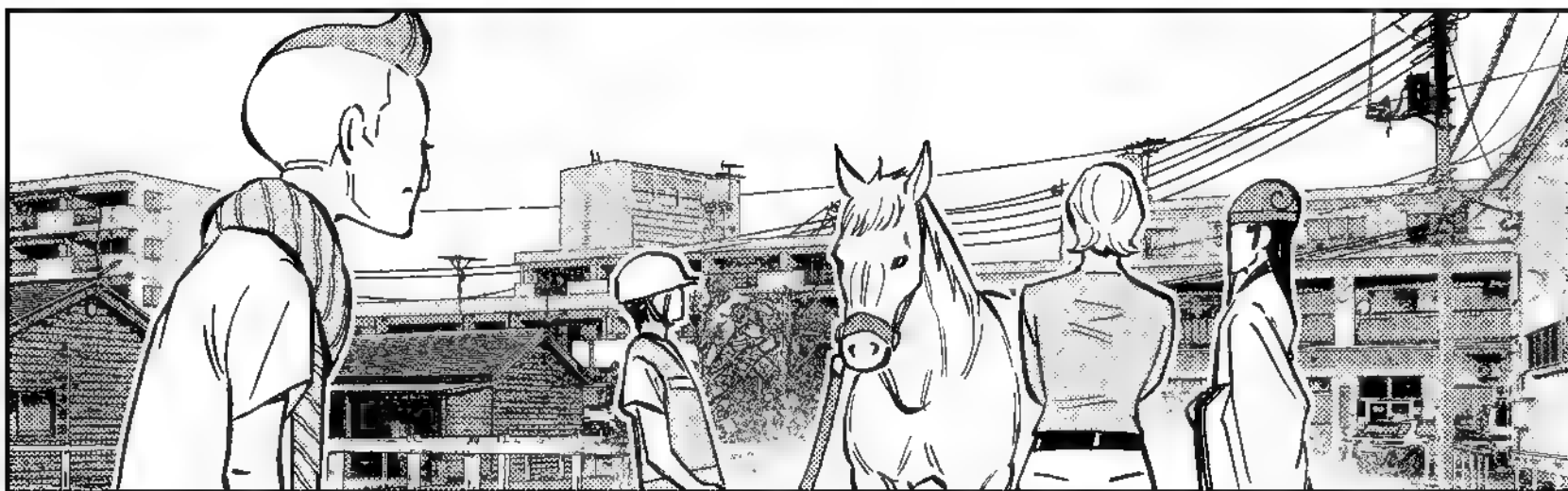
HOWEVER,
IF HE LOSES,
THEN HIS CAREER
AS A RACEHORSE
COULD VERY WELL
BE TERMINATED.

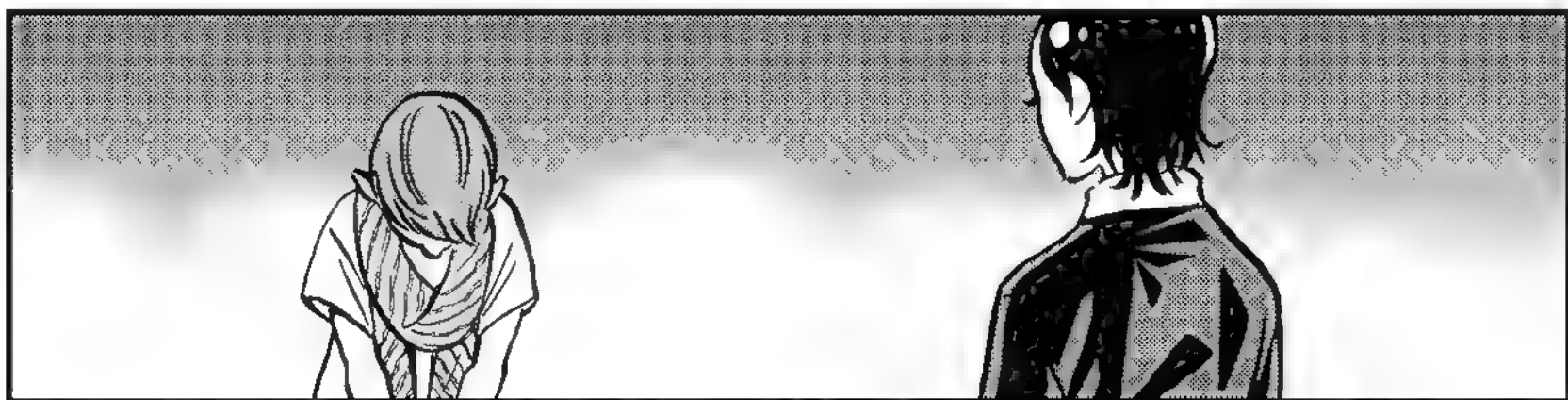
A black and white manga panel showing a man in traditional Japanese attire, including a white robe and a patterned sash, standing next to a white horse. The man is wearing a traditional Japanese cap and has a serious expression. The horse is looking towards the left.

...AND I
PROMISE TO
LEAD HIM TO
VICTORY.

ALLOW ME
TO REPEAT
MY PROMISE
TO YOU.

I SHALL
TRAIN
WEIWUSHU
RIDER...











AND
YOU'RE
CERTAIN
OF THAT?

WHAT?



...IS
GOING TO BE
COMPETING IN
THE MINAMI
CUP.

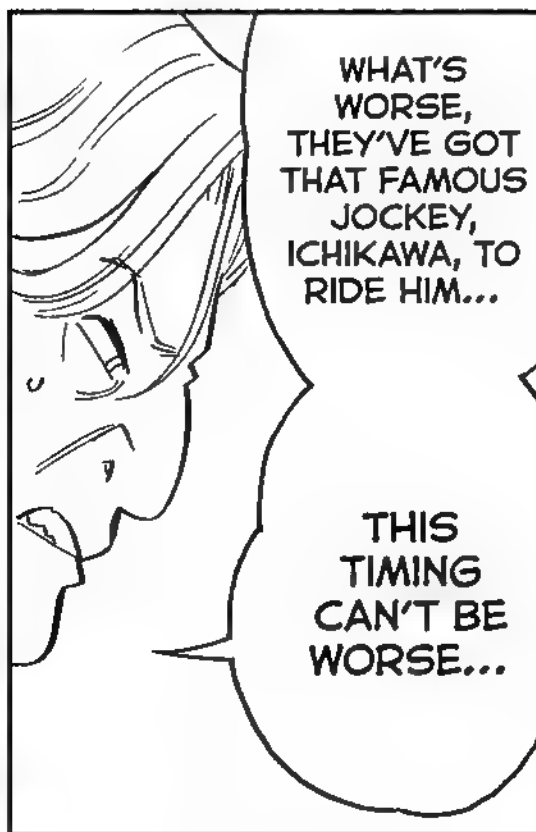
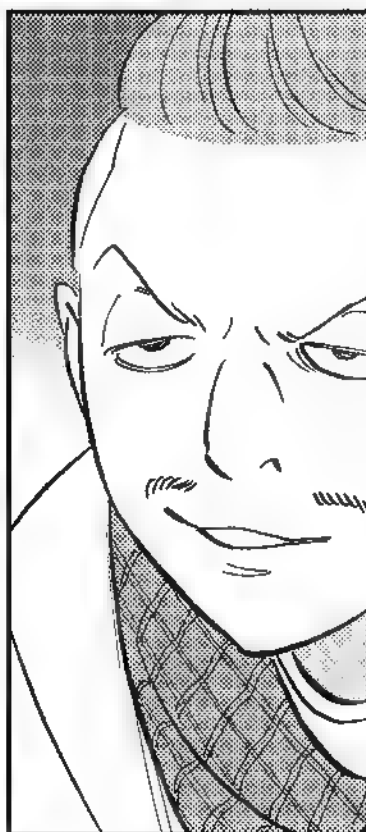
THE FAN-
FAVORITE,
TEQUILA
SUNRISE...

IS SOME-
THING THE
MATTER?



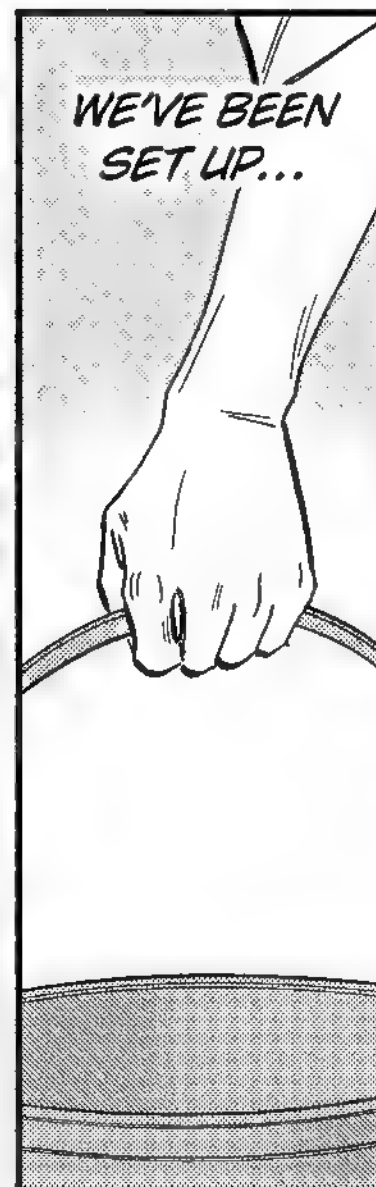
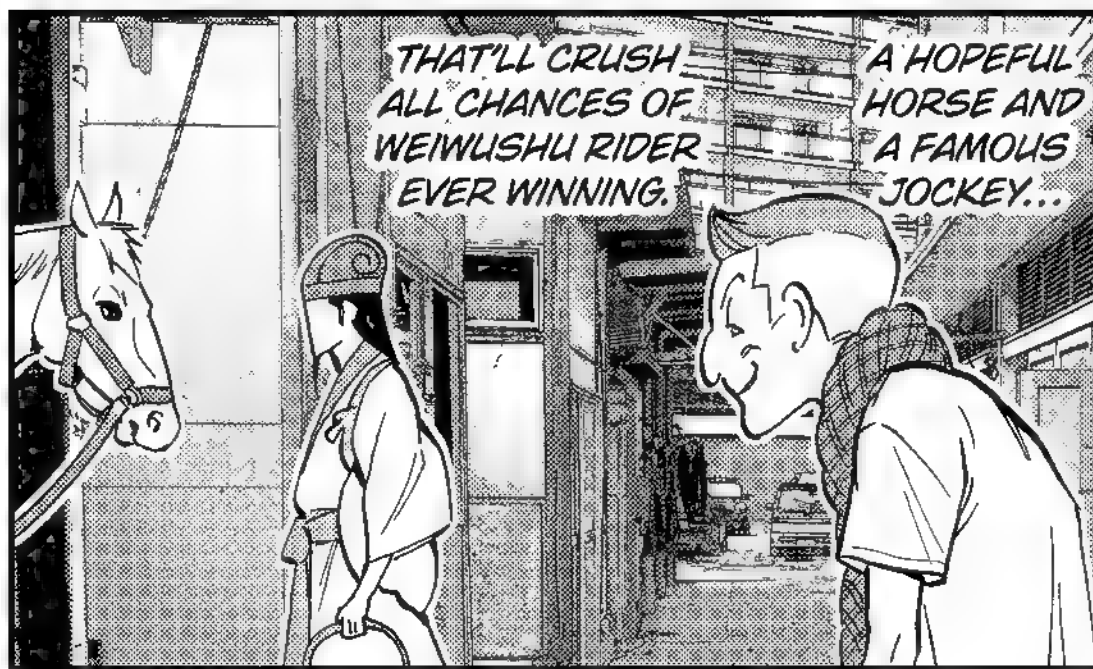
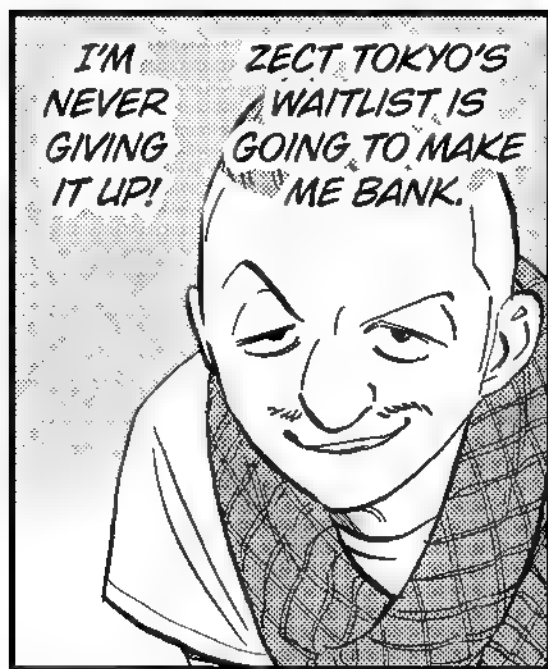
I KNEW HE'D
WANT HIS
HORSE TO
TAKE PART IN
THIS RACE.

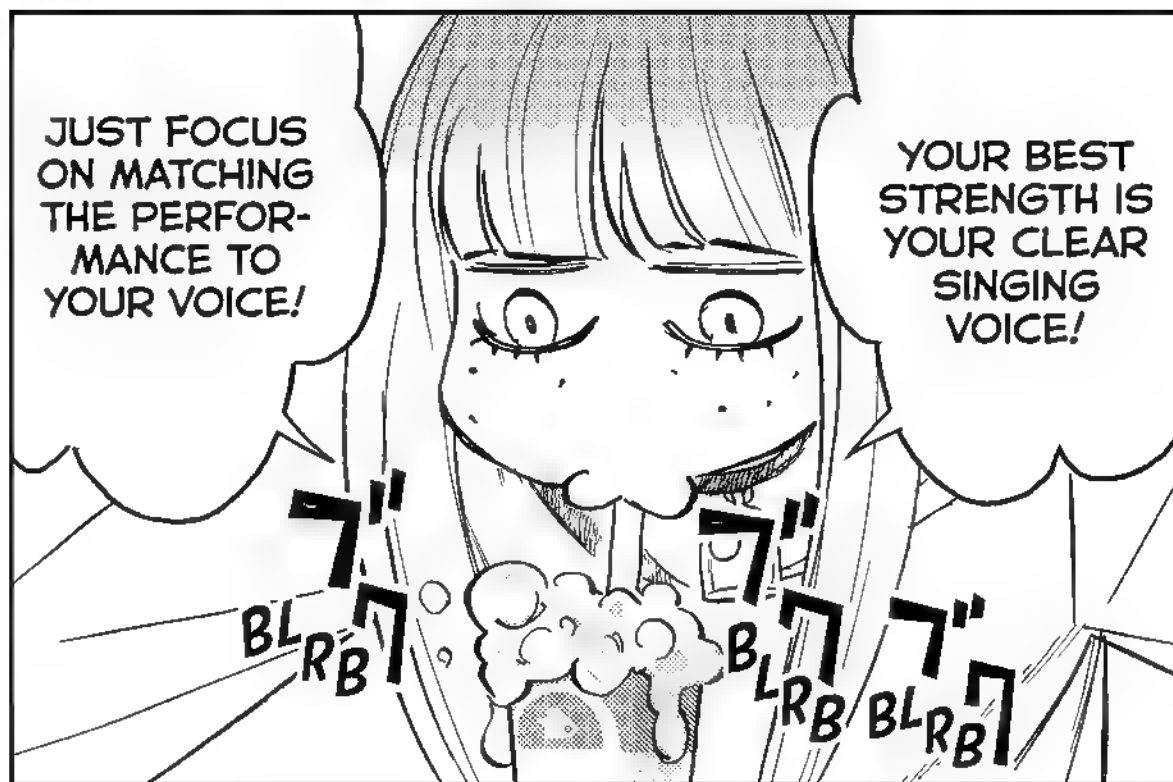
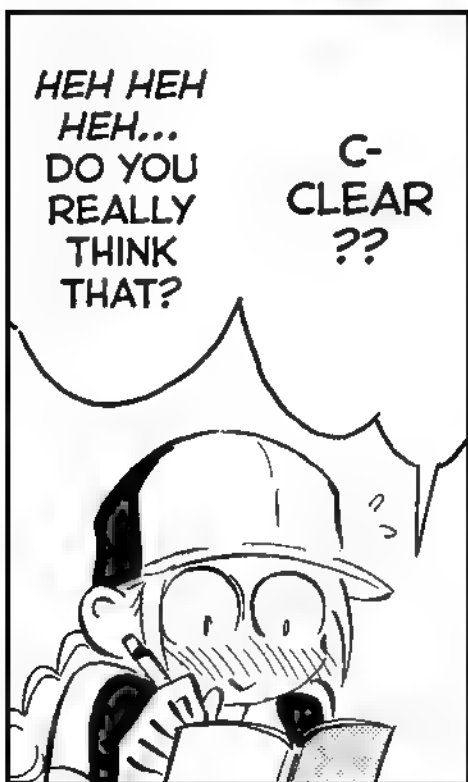
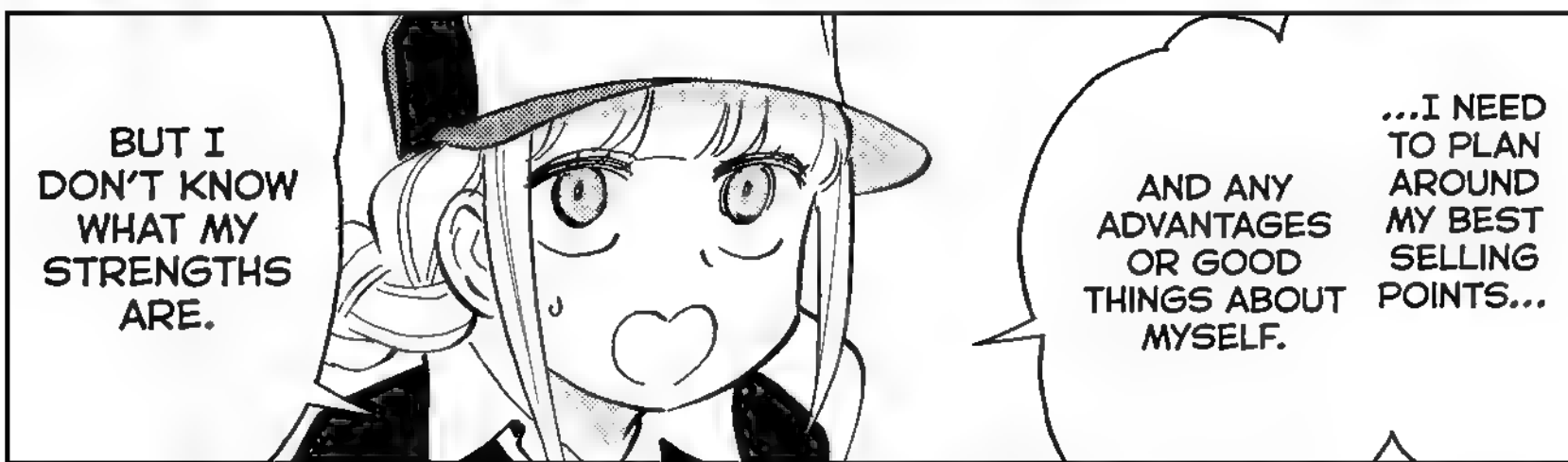
OSAKO-SAN LIKES
TO SHOW OFF, AND
HE SEES HIS WORK
FRIEND, SAKURABA-
SAN, AS A RIVAL.

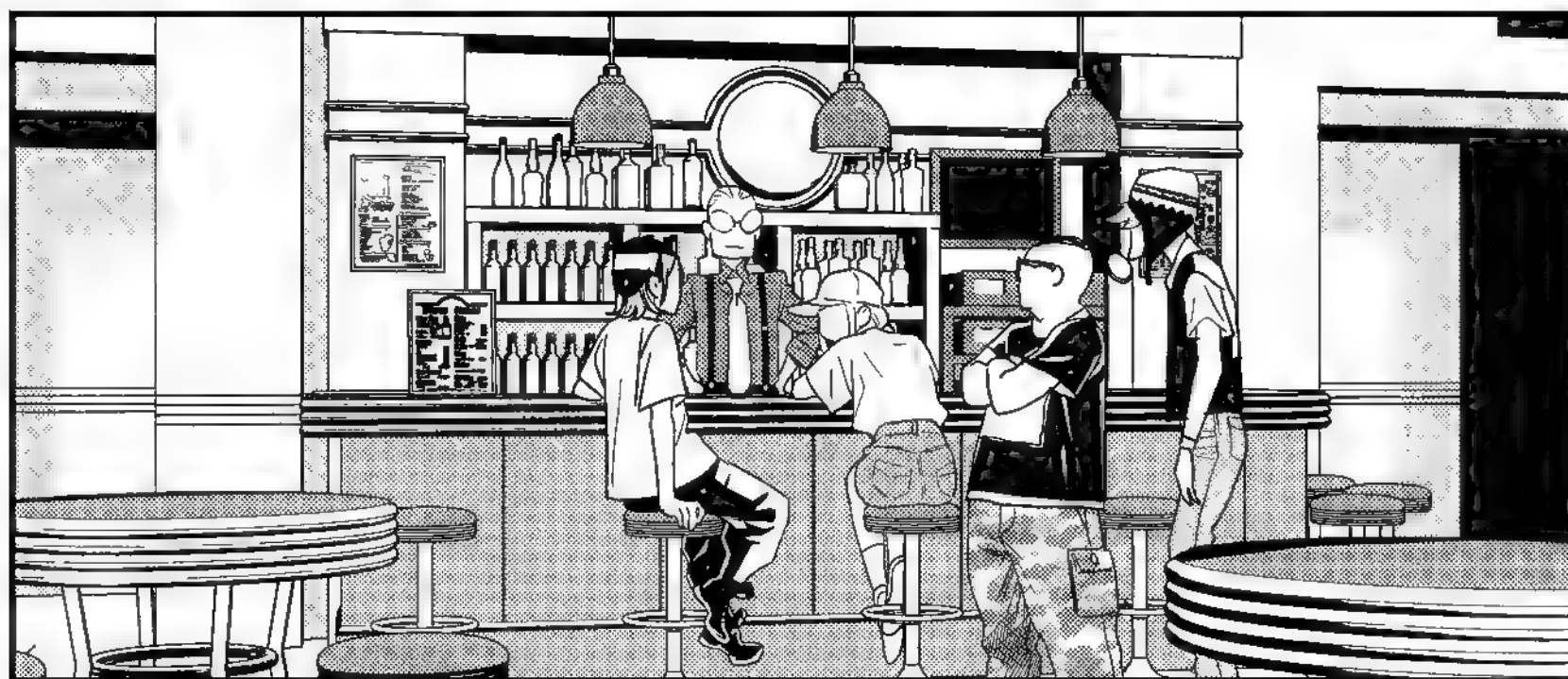
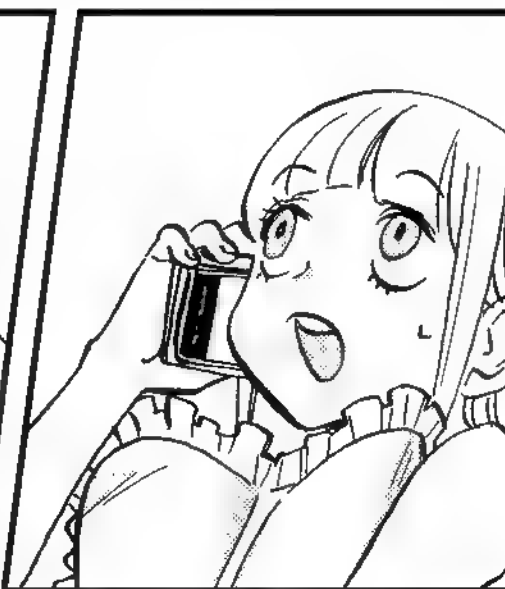
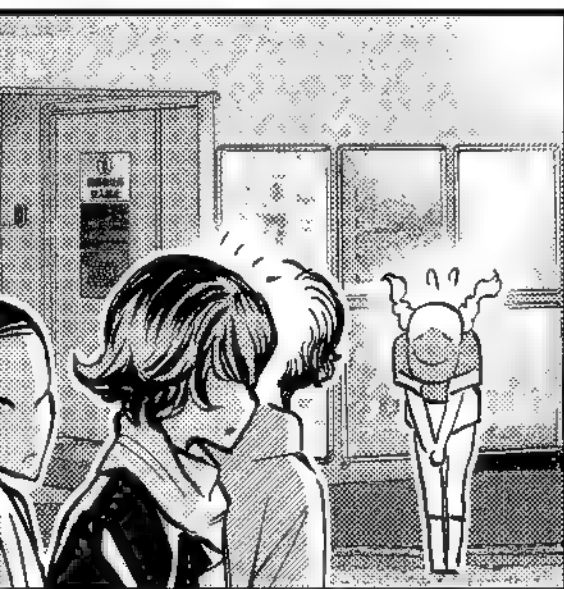
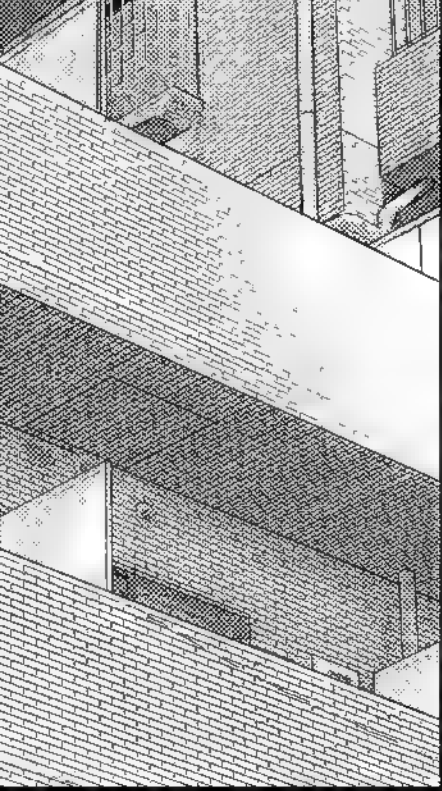


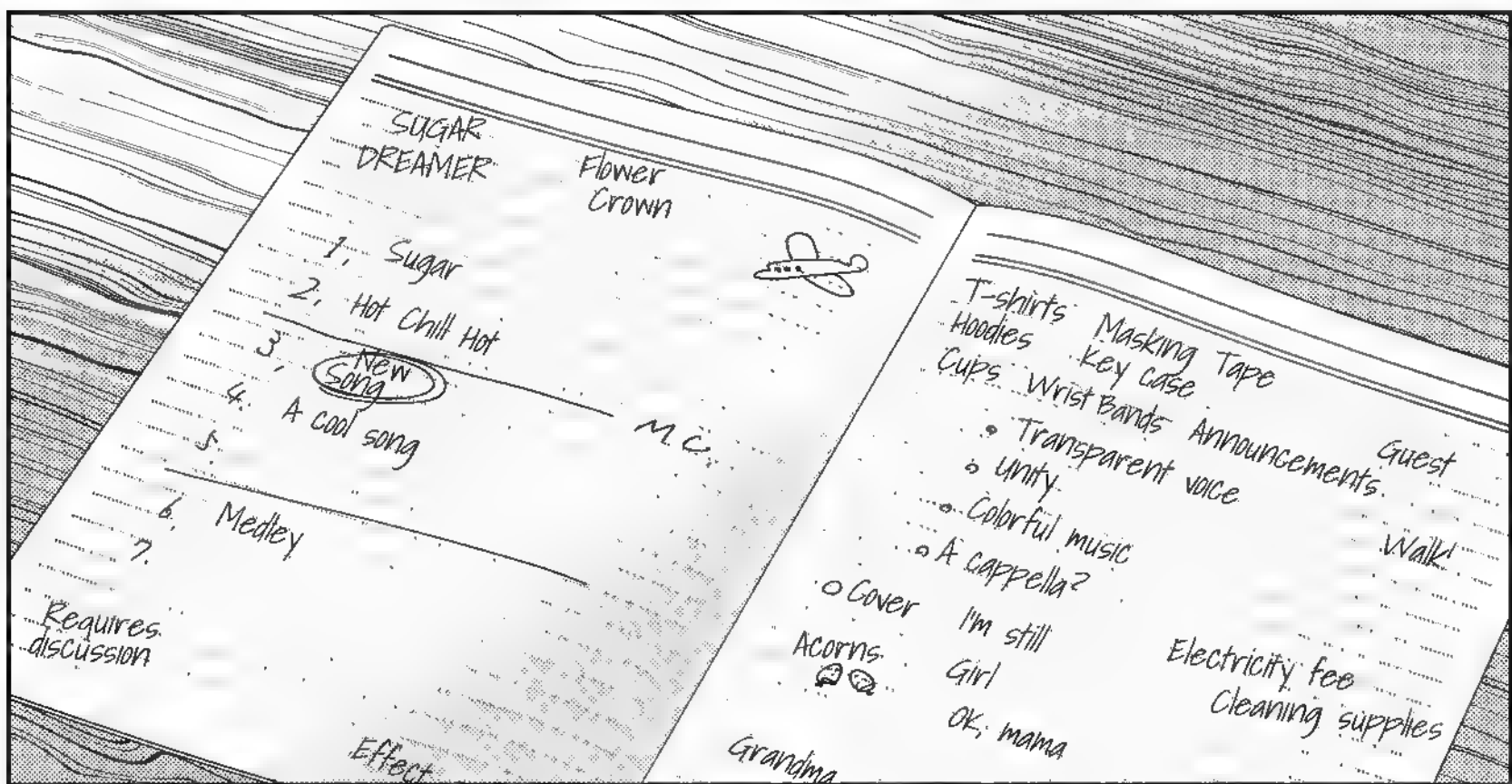
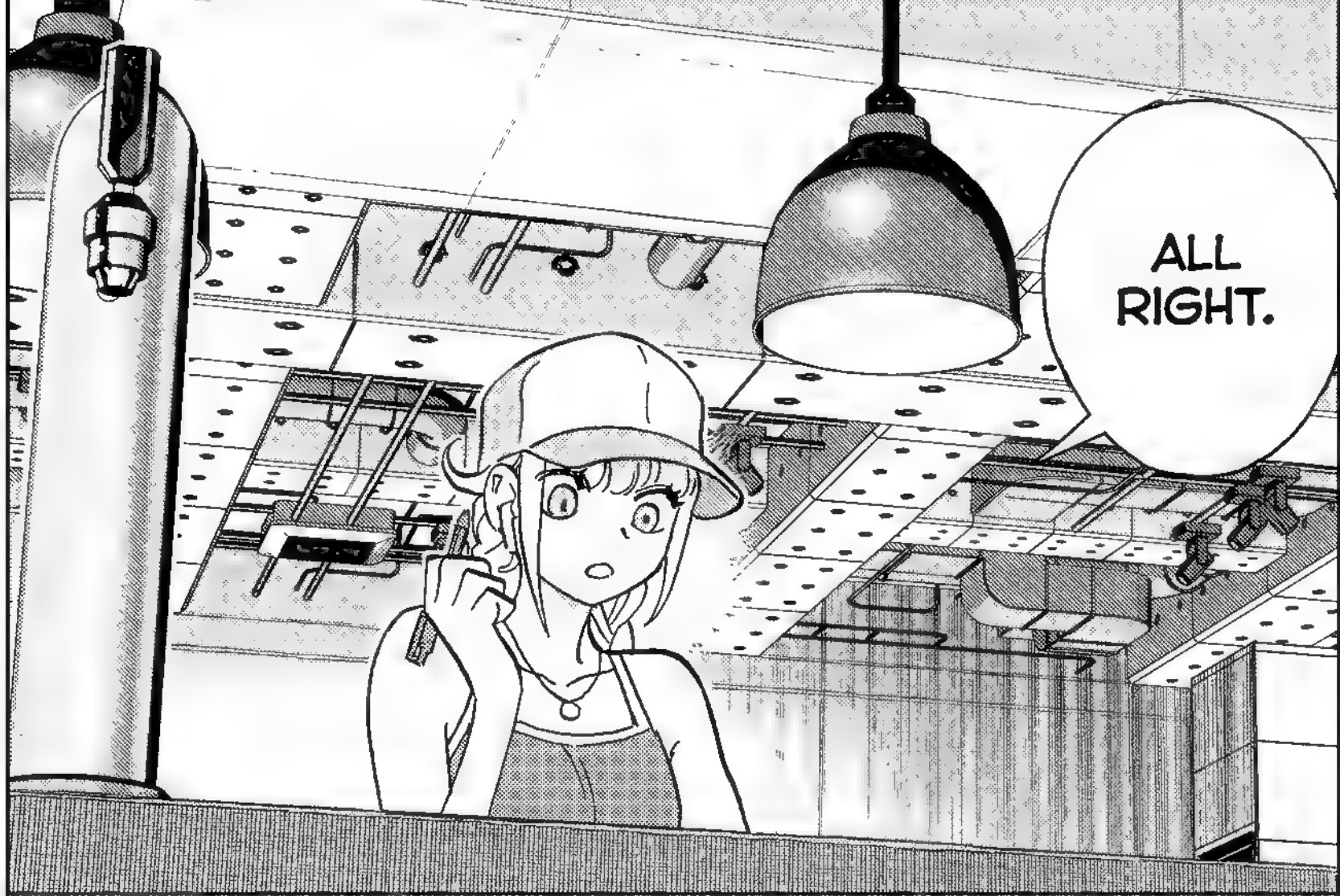
WHAT'S
WORSE,
THEY'VE GOT
THAT FAMOUS
JOCKEY,
ICHIKAWA, TO
RIDE HIM...

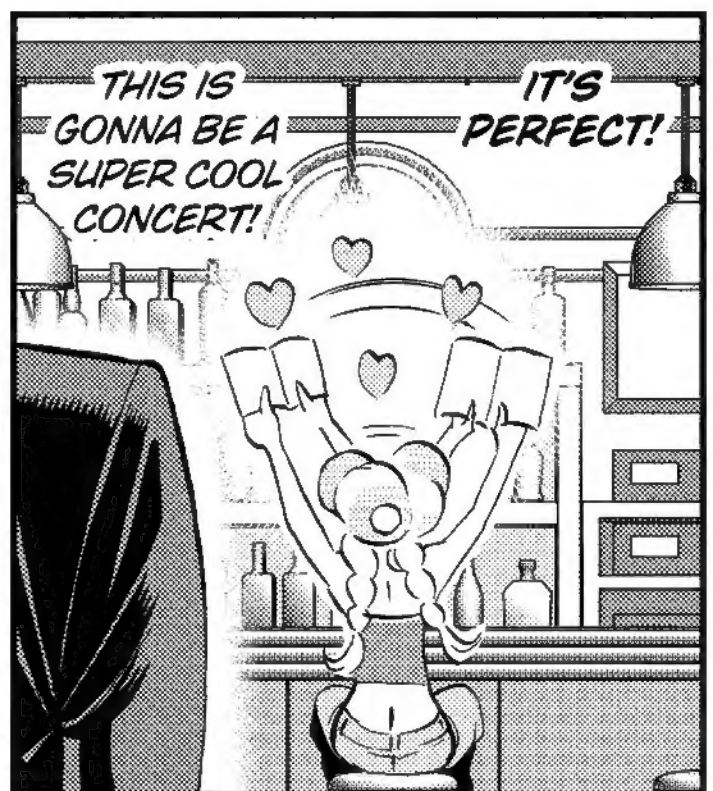
THIS
TIMING
CAN'T BE
WORSE...

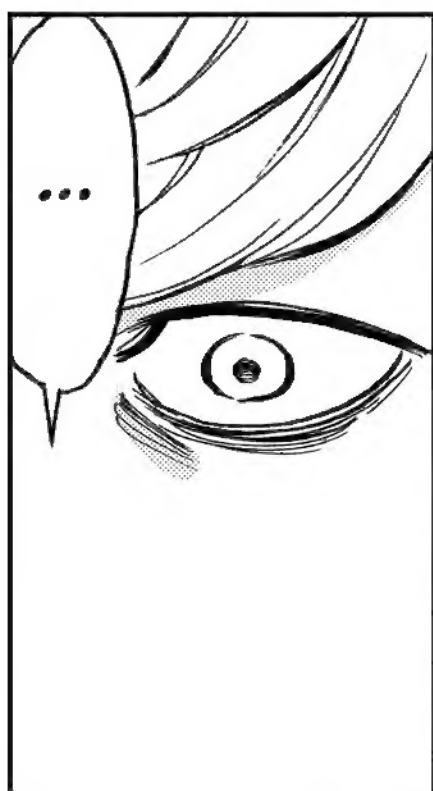


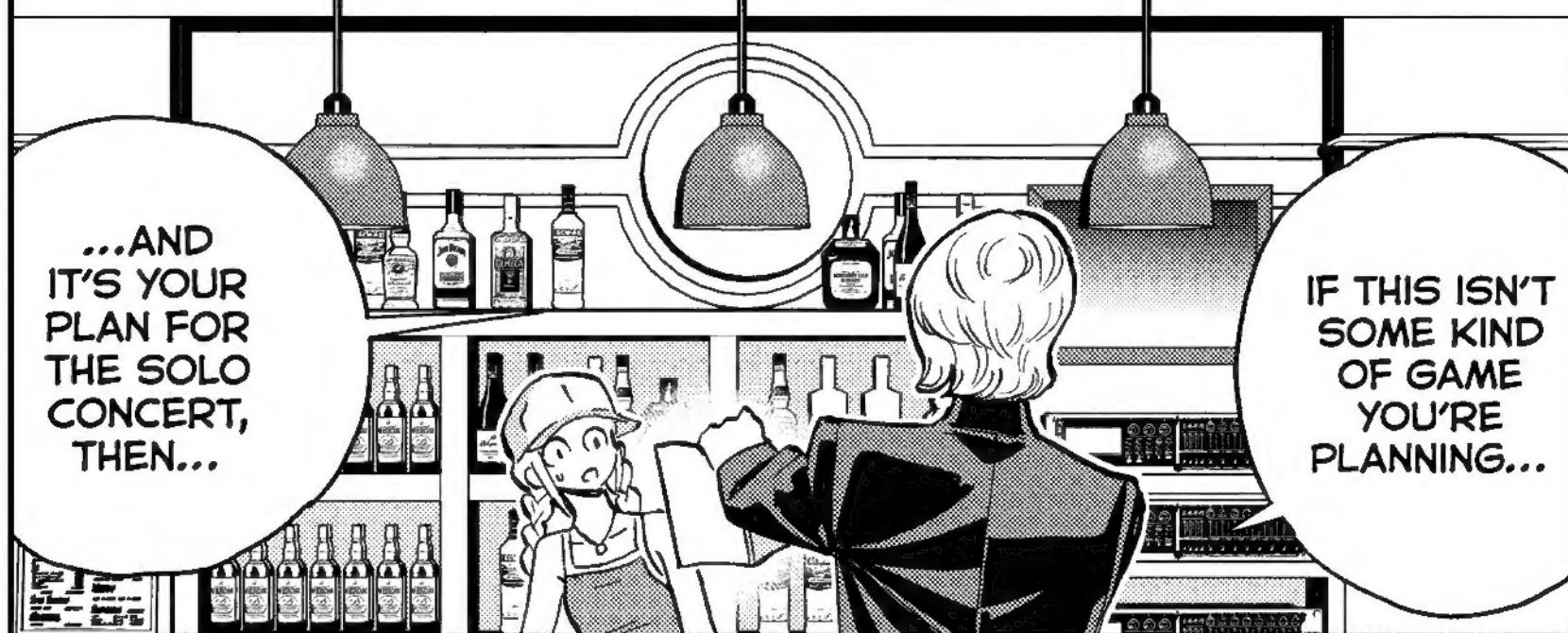






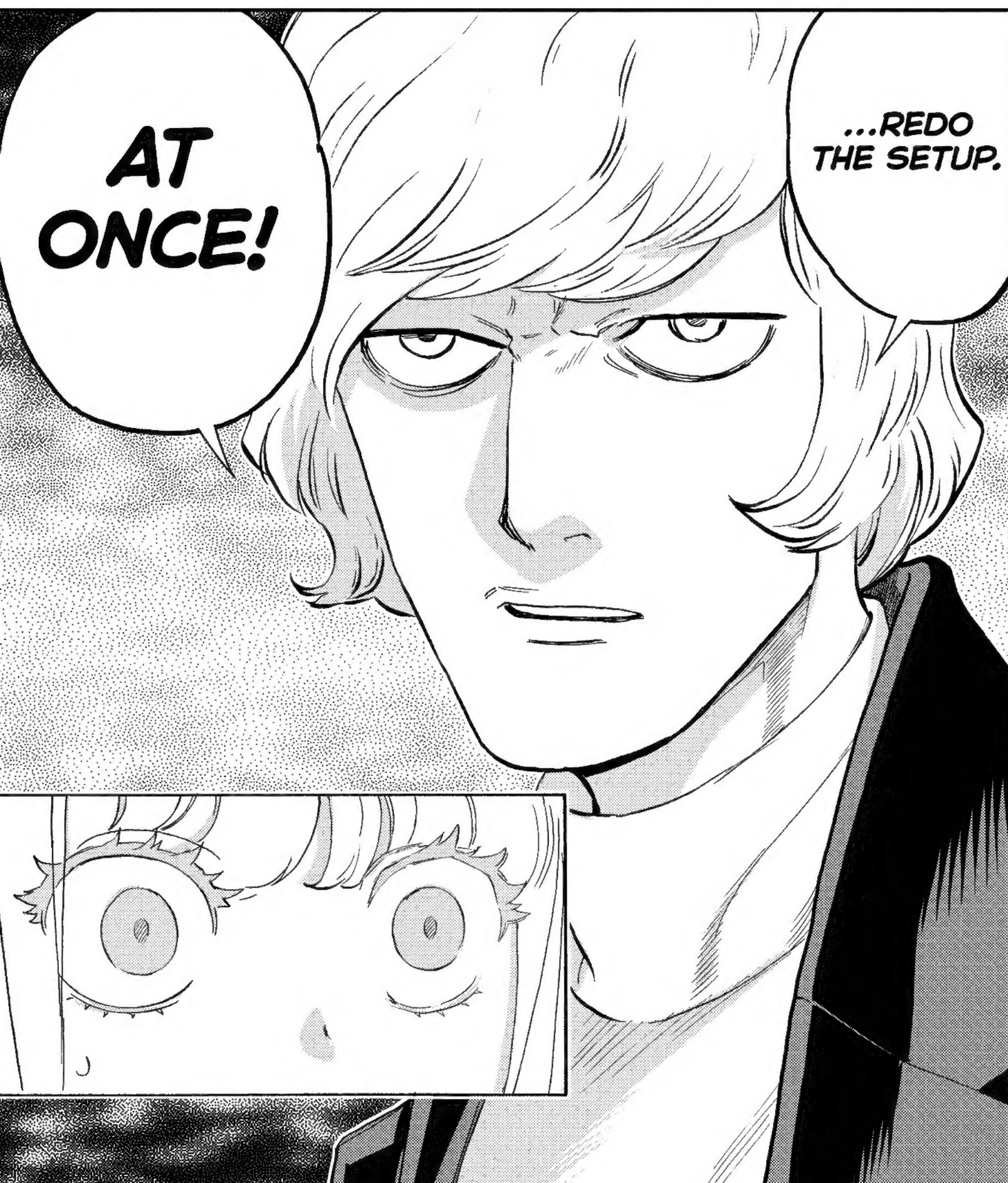






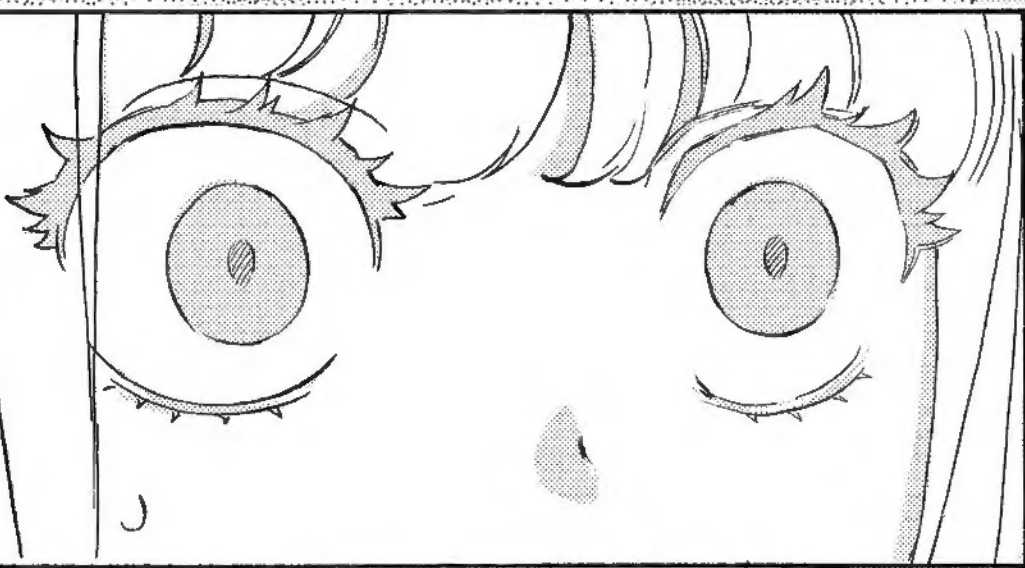
...AND
IT'S YOUR
PLAN FOR
THE SOLO
CONCERT,
THEN...

IF THIS ISN'T
SOME KIND
OF GAME
YOU'RE
PLANNING...



**AT
ONCE!**

...REDO
THE SETUP.



ya
Boy
Kong
ming!